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At the very moment when everything seems to go from bad to worse, it is then that we must make a supreme act of faith and know that the Grace will never fail us.

The hours before the dawn are always the darkest.

The servitude just before freedom comes is the most painful of all.

But in the heart endowed with faith burns the eternal flame of hope which leaves no room for discouragement.

The Mother

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The ADVENT

February, 1947

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A bodiless murmur travelled at his side
In the wounded gloom complaining against light.
A huge obstruction its immobile heart,
The watching opacity multiplied as he moved
Its hostile mass of dead and staring eyes;
The darkness glimmered like a dying torch.
Around him an extinguished phantom glare
Peopled with shadowy and misleading shapes
The vague Inconscient's dark and measureless cave.
His only sunlight was his spirit's flame.

Sri Aurobindo—*Savitri, Book II, Canto 5.*

A Prayer

Thou art consciousness and light, Thou art peace in the heart of all, divine love which transfigures, knowledge which triumphs over darkness. To feel Thee and aspire for Thee, we must have emerged from the immense sea of the subconscient; we must have begun to crystallise, to define and so to know and then to give ourselves as that alone can give itself which belongs to itself. And how many efforts and struggles are needed to attain to this crystallisation, to come out of the amorphous middle state; and how many efforts and struggles again to give ourselves, to surrender, once the individuality is constituted.

Few beings willingly consent to these efforts; then life with its brutality of the unforeseen compels men to make this endeavour against their will, because they cannot do otherwise. And little by little Thy work is accomplished inspite of all obstacles.

March 20, 1914 — *The Mother*

Vol. IV. No. 1 February 1947

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The ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - - *Sri Aurobindo.*

The World is One

WE say not only that India is one and indivisible (and for that matter Bengal too is one and indivisible, since we have to repeat axiomatic truths that have fallen on evil days and on evil tongues), but that also the whole world is one and indivisible. They who seek to drive in a wedge anywhere, who are busy laying some kind of *cordon sanitaire* across countries and nations or cultures and civilisations, in the holy name of a bigoted ideology, are, to say the least, doing a disservice to humanity, indeed they are inviting a disaster and catastrophe to the world and equally to themselves. For that is an attempt to stem the high tide of Nature's swell towards a global unity that shall brook no resistance.

The distinctions and differences that held good in other times and climes can have no sense or value in the world of today. Race or religion can divide man no longer; even nationhood has lost much of its original force and meaning. It is strange—perhaps it is inevitable in the secret process of Nature's working—that when everything in conditions and circumstances obviously demands and points to an obliteration of all frontiers of division and separation—economically and politically too—and all drive towards a closer co-operation and intermingling, it is precisely then that the contrary spirit and impulse raises its head and seems even to gather added strength and violence. The fact may have two explanations. First of all, it may mean a defence gesture in Nature, that is to say, certain forces or formations have a permanent place in Nature's economy and when they apprehend that they are being ousted and neglected, when there is a one-pointed drive for their exclusion, naturally they surge up and demand recognition with a vengeance: for things forgotten or left aside that form indissolubly part of Nature's fabric and pattern, one has to retrace one's steps in order to pick them up again. But also the phenomenon may mean a simple case of atavism: for we must know that there are certain old-world aboriginal habits and movements that have to go and have no place in the higher scheme of Nature and these too come up off and on, especially when the demand is there for their final liquidation. They have to be recognised as such and treated as such. Racial and religious (including ideological) egoisms seem to us to belong to the category.

In the higher scheme of Nature, the next evolutionary status that is bei forged, it is unity, harmony that is insisted upon, for that is the very basis of t new creation: whatever militates against that, whatever creates division and di ruption must be banned and ruthlessly eschewed. In the reality of things, in t actual life that man lives, it will be found that on the whole things that separa are less numerous and insistent than those that unite man and man or nation a nation, if each one simply lives and lets live: on the contrary, it is the points of co cordance and mutuality that abound. A certain knot or twist in the mind mak all the difference: it brings in the ignorance, selfishness, blind passion—a possessio by the dark forces of atavism that makes the mischief.

We ask for freedom, liberty of the individual, self-determination—well a good. But that does not mean the license to do as one pleases, impelled by one irrational idiosyncrasies. The individual must be truly individual, not a fraction being, the self must be the real self, not a shadow or surface formulation in ord to have the full right to unfettered movement. Liberty, yes; but that means liber for all, which means again the other two terms of the great trinity, equality a fraternity. Individuality, yes; that means every individuality, in other words, sol darity. The two sides of the equation must be given equal value and equal empha sis. If the stress upon one leads to Nazism, Fascism or Stalinism, steam-rollere uniformity or stream-lined regimentation, the death of the individual, the oth emphasis leads to disintegration and disruption, to the same end only in a diffe rent way. But in the world of today, after the victory in the last war over the Na conception of humanity, it seems as though the spirit of disruption has go abroad, human consciousness has been atom-bombed into flying fragments; so w have the spectacle of all manner of parochialism pullulating on the earth, region and ideological—Imperial Blocks, nations, groups, parties have chequered *a infinitum*, have balkanised human commonalty.

We badly needed a United Nations' Organisation, but we are facing th utmost possible disunity. The lesson is that politics alone will not save us, n even economics. The word has gone forth: what is required is a *change of hear* The leaders of humanity must have a new heart grafted in place of the old. Tha is the surgical operation imperative at the moment. That heart will declare in it beats that the cosmos is not atomic but one and indivisible, *ekam sat, neha nānās kiñcana.*

"Perennial Philosophy"

This latest work of Aldous Huxley is a collection of sayings of sages an saints and philosophers from all over the world and of all times. The sayings ar arranged under several heads such as "That art Thou", "The Nature of th Ground", "Divine Incarnation", "Self-Knowledge", "Silence", "Faith" etc. which clearly give an idea of the contents and also of the "Neo-Brhamin's" ow personal preoccupation. There is also a running commentary, rather a note o each saying, meant to elucidate and explain, naturally from the compiler's stand point, what is obviously addressed to the initiate.

A similar compilation was published in the Arya, called "Eternal Wisdom (Les Paroles eternelles, in French) a portion of which appeared later on in book form: that was more elaborate, the contents were arranged in such a way that n comments were needed, they were self-explanatory divided as they were in chap ters and sections and subsections with proper headings, the whole thing put in

gical and organised sequence. Huxley's compilation begins under the title of the panishadic text "That art thou" with this saying of Eckhart: "The more God in all things, the more He is outside them. The more He is within, the more ithout". It will be interesting to note that the Arya compilation too starts with ıe same idea under the title "The God of All; the God who is in All", the first ıotation being from Philolaus, "The Universe is a Unity". The "Eternal Wis-ɔm" has an introduction called "The Song of Wisdom" which begins with this ying from the Book of Wisdom: "We fight to win sublime Wisdom; therefore ıen call us warriors".

Huxley gives only one quotation from Sri Aurobindo under the heading "God ı the World". Here it is:

"The touch of Earth is always reinvigorating to the son of Earth, even when e seeks a supraphysical Knowledge. It may even be said that the supraphysical ın only be really mastered in its fullness—to its heights we can always reach—hen we keep our feet firmly on the physical. 'Earth is His footing' says the panishad, whenever it images the Self that manifests in the universe."

Huxley's commentary is as follows:

" 'To its heights we can always come.' For those of us who are still splashing ɔout in the lower ooze, the phrase has a rather ironical ring. Nevertheless, in ıe light of even the most distant acquaintance with the heights and the fullness, is possible to understand what its author means. To discover the Kingdom of God exclusively within oneself is easier than to discover it, not only there, but also ı the outer worlds of minds and things and living creatures. It is easier because ıe heights within reveal themselves to those who are ready to exclude from their urview all that lies without. And though this exclusion may be a painful and ıortificatory process, the fact remains that it is less arduous than the process of ıclusion, by which we come to know the fullness as well as the heights of spiri-ıal life. Where there is exclusive concentration on the heights within, tempta-ons and distractions are avoided and there is a general denial and suppression. ut when the hope is to know God inclusively—to realise the divine Ground in ıe world as well as in the soul, temptations and distractions must not be avoided, ut submitted to and used as opportunities for advance; there must be no sup-ression of outward-turning activities, but a transformation of them so that ıey become sacramental."

The neatness of the commentary cannot be improved upon. Only with re-ard to the "ironical ring" of which Huxley speaks, it has just to be pointed out, s he himself seems to understand, that the "we" referred to in the phrase does ot mean humanity in general that 'splashes about in the lower ooze' but those ho have a sufficiently developed inner spiritual life.

There is a quotation from Lao Tzu put under the heading "Grace and Free ill": "It was when the Great Way declined that human kindness and morality rose".

We fear Mr. Huxley has completely missed the point of the cryptic sentence. Ie seems to take it as meaning that human kindness and morality are a means to ıe recovery of the Lost Way—although codes of ethics and deliberate choices re not sufficient in themselves, they are only a second best, yet they mark the ise of self-consciousness and have to be utilised to pass on into the unitive nowledge that is Tao. This explanation or amplification seems to us somewhat onfused and irrelevant to the idea expressed in the apophthegm. What is stated ere is much simpler and transparent. It is this that when the Divine is absent

and the divine knowledge, then comes in man with his human mental knowledg it is man's humanity that clouds the Divine and to reach the Divine one mus reject the human values, all the moralities, *sarva dharmān*, seek only the Divin The lesser way lies through the dualities, good and evil, the Great Way is beyon them and cannot be limited or measured by the relative standards. Especiall in the modern age we see the decline and almost the disappearance of the Greate Light and instead a thousand smaller lights are lighted which vainly strive t dispel the gathering darkness. These do not help, they are false lights and me are apt to cling to them shutting their eyes to the true one which is not that tha one worships here and now, *nedam yadidam upāsate*.

There is a beautiful quotation from the Chinese sage Wu Ch'êng-ên regard ing the doubtful utility of written Scriptures:

'Listen to this!' shouted Monkey. 'After all the trouble we had getting her from China, and after you specially ordered that we were to be given the scrip tures, Ananda and Kasyapa made a fraudulent delivery of goods. They gave u blank copies to take away; I ask you, what is the good of that to us? 'You needn' shout,' said the Buddha smiling. 'As a matter of fact, it is such blank scrolls a these that are the true scriptures. But I quite see that the people of China ar too foolish and ignorant to believe this, so there is nothing for it but to giv them copies with some writing on.'

A sage can smile and smile delightfully! The parable illustrates the well known Biblical phrase, 'the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life'. The monke is symbolical of the ignorant, arrogant, fussy human mind. There is anothe Buddhistic story about the monkey quoted in the book and it is as delightful but being somewhat long we cannot reproduce it here. It tells how the mind monkey is terribly agile, quick, clever, competent, moving lightning fast, ima gining that it can easily go to the end of the world, to Paradise itself, t Brahmic status. But alas! when he thought he was speeding straight like rocket or an arrow and arrived right at the target, he found that he wa spinning like a top at the same spot, and what he very likely took to be th very fragrance of the topmost supreme heaven was nothing but the aroma o his own urine.

The Freedom and the Force of the Spirit

The first thing that has to be learnt in life is that circumstances are not a in all: however powerful and overwhelming they may appear to be at a give moment, man can always react against them. If there is not an immediate succes externally as desired, the will thus exerted does not go in vain. First of all, declares and asserts the independence and autonomy of the inner man: somethin within is found and established which is not touched by the environment, whic lives by its own authentic truth and reality and is ever contented and happy It is in reference to such a poise of consciousness that the great poet says:

> A mind not to be changed by place or time.
> The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a Heaven of Hell.....

The soldier of an ideal, the martyr bear testimony to the reality of this menta condition: the Yogi is he who is supremely indifferent to outside contacts (*mātrā*

parśāḥ), fixed as he is in inner union with the Divine. Secondly, the freedom f the will not only liberates the inner person, but exerts a pressure on the out- de also, upon the field and circumstances, obliging them to change or move n the direction and according to the demand of the will. Consciousness has his power: only all depends on the nature of the consciousness and the will it mbodies. For consciousness-will has varying degrees and levels of its potential. A will belonging to the purely mental consciousness can have only a very limited esult and may not even show itself at all in any external modification. For it s only one among a million contending forces and its effect will depend upon the llies it can count on its side. Similar is the case with a vital will or a physico- ital will: these are more effective apparently but always in a narrow field, the arrower the field the greater the possibility of the effectiveness. Moreover a nental will affects chiefly the mental field, a vital will is directly operative in the ital world, even as a physical force is effective on physical things: each is largely onfined to its own domain, the effect on other domains is for the most part ndirect and remote.

But the truly effective will, the will that can produce an all-round change, omes from a still higher or deeper source. Indeed the will that never fails, hat turns even the external circumstances, adverse and obstructive though they ppear to be, to serve it is the will of the soul, the spiritual being in us. And man s man, not a mere animal, because he has been called upon to seek and find his oul, to get at his inner and inmost being and from there command his external ature and outside circumstances too. The orthodox name for this endeavour is piritual discipline or Yoga.

On lower levels, a conscious will made up of a compound energy of the nental and vital and physical will, when in sufficient proportions, has consi- lerable effective force: great men of action have this distinction. Even then owever theirs is not that type which is absolute or never-failing nor that especial ategory which will bring about a collective change, a fundamental change, inten- ive as well as extensive, needed at this evolutionary crisis of earth and humanity.

The ordinary average man is part and parcel of Nature's movement and his ife is almost wholly moulded by circumstances: he has not developed an inde- pendent inner being that can react against the universal Nature's current, that is o say, the Nature as it is, as it is actually and dynamically expressed. He is the creature, described graphically in the Gita, as being moved helplessly on the circling wheel of Ignorance. But even among the average men there are many who are called men of will, they are not entirely submerged in Nature's current, but endeavour to have their own way even against that current. Their psycho- vital consciousness, aided often by their physical, has an independent formation, being a strong centre of self-driven force, and can impress upon the outer Nature and circumstances its own pattern and disposition. Naturally all depends upon the degree and character of that consciousness.

But the true secret of the power to control and guide Nature's dispensation ies along a different line, not along the line of the normal activity of the mental and vital and physical consciousness. Body and life and mind belong after all, at least are closely affiliated to one's environmental consciousness; they are indeed part of the circumstances in which one is born and lives and moves. It is when one by-passes them or passes through them beyond into one's soul, into one's true being and divine personality that one at last crosses mortality and attains immortality—*mṛtyum tīrtwā amṛtam aśnute*.

"Savitri" *

Savitri, the Divine Grace in human form, is upon earth. The Divine Consciousness has abandoned its own supreme transcendental status to enter into the human consciousness and partake of the earthly life: it has taken up a mortal frame, to live and dwell here below. Only thus can she transform the lower animal nature into the divine nature, raise man to godhead, make of earth heaven itself.

> A prodigal of her rich divinity,
> Her self and all she was she had lent to men,
> Hoping her greater being to implant
> That heaven might native grow in mortal soil.

But the task is not easy. The flesh is weak: it is incapable of holding or receiving the breath of immortality. Not only so, it has a positive aversion, a bad will it is refractory, antipathetic to the touch of the spirit. Matter is dull and dumb dark and obdurate: mortality loves and clings jealously and exclusively to its mortal home. The earthly being does not know, cannot appreciate the gift, the boon that is brought to him, to his very door: he has only to receive and accept in order to be saved out of all ignorance and grief, impotence and death. The Divine Mother has forgotten herself, has made herself as small and as close and native to earth as any earthly creature, like any one of us, taken upon herself all the limitations and indignities, the entire burden of an earthly life, graced with her presence this mortal atmosphere. But

> Hard is it to persuade earth-nature's change;
> Mortality bears ill the eternal's touch:
> It fears the pure divine intolerance
> Of its assault of ether and of fire;
> It murmurs at its sorrowless happiness,
> Almost with hate repels the light it brings.....

As, however, "mortality bears ill the eternal's touch", the eternal too is intolerant of the mortal nature—only it is intolerant not in the ignorant, blind, squeamish weak human way, but in a divine way, for it is armed with weapons of light and knowledge, it assaults with its luminous force, the energy of ether and fire, the higher and nobler elements as against the dense dark dumb earth, the lower element that clothes the human consciousness. Indeed, mortality is enamoured of the tangled beam of joy and sorrow, of laughter and tears, of light and shadow and cannot contemplate the unalloyed sheer delight in Eternity. It is out of breath in the serene rarefied air of immortality; it pines for the *terra ferma*, the mud and slime. The human consciousness has been fleeing the Hound of Heaven down the corridors of Time, and yet it will be caught in the end and wholly transmuted in the divine embrace into the substance of the Divine Himself. All the unwillingness and protestation and revolt are meant to forge and hammer the final union into something perfect, faultless, absolute.

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* Savitri, A Legend and a Symbol. Book I. Canto I. By Sri Aurobindo.

SAVITRI

BOOK THREE

CANTO II

THE ADORATION OF THE DIVINE MOTHER

A STILLNESS absolute, incommunicable,
Marks the sheer self-discovery of the soul;
A wall of stillness shuts it from the world,
A gulf of stillness swallows up the sense
And makes unreal all that mind has known.
Only the Inconceivable is left,
Only the Nameless without space and time:
Self's vast spiritual silence occupies space;
Thought falls from us and we cease from joy and grief;
The ego is dead; we are free from being and Time,
We have done with birth and death and work and fate.
O soul, it is too early to rejoice!
Thou hast reached the boundless silence of the Self,
Thou hast leaped into a glad divine abyss;
But where hast thou thrown self's mission and self's power?
On what dead bank on the Eternal's road?
One was within thee who was all the world,
What hast thou done for his purpose in the stars?
Escape is not the victory and the crown!
Something thou cam'st to do from the Unknown,
But nothing is finished and the world goes on,
Because only half God's cosmic work is done.
Only the everlasting No has neared
And stared into thy eyes and killed thy heart:
But where is the Lover's everlasting Yes,
And immortality in the secret heart,
The voice that chants to the creator Fire,
The symboled OM, the great assenting Word,
The bridge between the rapture and the calm,
The passion and the beauty of the Bride,
The chamber where the glorious enemies kiss,
The smile that saves, the golden peak of things?
This too is Truth at the mystic fount of Life.
A black veil has been lifted; we have seen
The mighty shadow of the omniscient Lord;
But who has lifted up the veil of light

And who has seen the body of the King?
A mystery of God's birth and acts remains,
Unsolved is the riddle of the unfinished Play;
The cosmic Player laughs within his mask,
And still the last inviolable secret hides
Behind the human glory of a Form,
Behind the gold eidolon of a Name.
A large white line has figured as a goal,
But far beyond the ineffable suntracks blaze.
What seemed the source and end was a wide gate,
A last bare step into eternity.
An eye has opened upon timelessness,
Infinity takes back the forms it gave,
And through God's darkness or his naked light
His million rays return into the Sun.
There is a zero sign of the Supreme;
Nature left nude and still uncovers God.
But in her grandiose nothingness all is there:
When her strong garbs are torn away from us,
The soul's ignorance is slain but not the soul.
The zero covers an immortal face.
A high and black negation is not all,
A huge extinction is not God's last word,
Life's ultimate sense, the close of being's course,
The meaning of this great mysterious world.
In absolute silence sleeps an absolute Power.
Awaking, it can wake the trance-bound soul
And in the ray reveal the parent sun:
It can make the world a vessel of Spirit's force,
It can fashion in the clay God's perfect shape.
To free the self is but a radiant pace;
Here to fulfil himself was God's desire.

Even while he stood on being's naked edge
And all the passion and seeking of his soul
Faced their extinction in some featureless Vast,
The Presence he yearned for suddenly drew close.
Across the silence of the ultimate Calm,
Out of a marvellous Transcendence' core,
A body of wonder and translucency
Wearing, as if the sweet summary of her soul,
Someone came infinite and absolute.
A being of wisdom, power and delight,
Even as a mother draws her child to her arms,
Took to her breast Nature and world and soul.
Abolishing the signless emptiness,
Breaking the vacancy and voiceless hush,
Piercing the limitless Unknowable,
Into the liberty of the motionless depths
A beautiful and felicitous lustre stole,

Imaged itself in a surprising beam
And built a golden passage to his heart
Touching through him all longing sentient things.
A moment's sweetness of the All-Beautiful
Cancelled the vanity of the cosmic whirl.
A Nature throbbing with a Heart divine
Was felt in the unconscious universe;
It made the breath a happy mystery
And brought a love sustaining pain with joy;
Affirming in life a secret ecstasy
It held the spirit to its miraculous course;
Carrying immortal values to the hours
It justified the labour of the suns.
For one was there supreme behind the God.
A Mother Might brooded upon the world;
A Consciousness revealed its marvellous front
Transcending all that is, denying none:
Imperishable above our fallen heads
He felt a rapturous and unstumbling Force.
The undying Truth appeared, the enduring Power
Of all that here is made and then destroyed,
The Mother of all godheads and all strengths
Who, mediatrix, binds earth to the Supreme.
The Enigma ceased that rules our nature's night,
The covering Nescience was unmasked and slain;
Its mind of error was stripped off from things
And the dull moods of its perverting will.
Illumined by her all-seeing identity
Knowledge and Ignorance could strive no more;
No longer could the titan Opposites,
Antagonist poles of the world's artifice,
Impose the illusion of their twofold screen
Throwing their figures between us and her.
The Wisdom was near, disguised by its own works,
Of which the darkened universe is the robe.
No more existence seemed an aimless fall,
Extinction was no more the sole release.
The hidden Word was found, the long-sought clue,
Revealed was the meaning of our spirit's birth,
Condemned to an imperfect body and mind,
In the inconscience of material things
And the indignity of mortal life.
A Heart was felt in the spaces wide and bare,
A burning Love from white spiritual founts
Annulled the sorrow of the ignorant depths;
Suffering was lost in her immortal smile.
A Life from beyond grew conqueror here of Death;
To err no more was natural to mind;
Wrong could not come where all was light and love.
The Formless and the Formed were joined in her.

Immensity was exceeded by a look,
A Face revealed the crowded Infinite.
Incarnating inexpressibly in her limbs
The boundless joy the blind world-forces seek,
Her body of beauty mooned the seas of bliss.
At the head she stands of birth and toil and fate,
In their slow round the cycles turn to her call;
Alone her hands can change Time's dragon base.
Hers is the mystery the Night conceals;
The spirit's alchemist energy is hers;
She is the golden bridge, the wonderful fire.
The luminous heart of the Unknown is she,
A power of silence in the depths of God;
She is the Force, the inevitable Word,
The magnet of our difficult ascent,
The Sun from which we kindle all our suns,
The Light that leans from the unrealised Vasts,
The joy that beckons from the impossible,
The Might of all that never yet came down.
All Nature dumbly calls to her alone
To heal with her feet the aching throb of life
And break the seals on the dim soul of man
And kindle her fire in the closed heart of things.
All here shall be one day her sweetness's home,
All contraries prepare her harmony;
Towards her our knowledge climbs, our passion gropes,
In her miraculous rapture we shall dwell,
Her clasp will turn to ecstasy our pain.
Our self shall be one self with all through her.
In her confirmed because transformed in her,
Our life shall find in its fulfilled response
Above, the boundless hushed beatitudes,
Below, the wonder of the embrace divine.
This known as in a thunder-flash of God,
The rapture of things eternal filled his limbs;
Amazement fell upon his ravished sense;
His spirit was caught in her intolerant flame.
Once seen, his heart acknowledged only her.
Only a hunger of infinite bliss was left.
All aims in her were lost, then found in her;
His base was gathered into one pointing spire.

Thus was a seed cast into endless Time.
A Word is spoken or a Light is shown,
A moment sees, the ages toil to express.
So flashing out of the Timeless leaped the worlds;
An eternal instant is the cause of the years.
All he had done was to prepare a field;
Its small beginnings asked for a mighty end:
For all that he had been must now new-shape

In him her joy to embody, to enshrine
Her beauty and greatness in his house of life.
But now his being was too wide for self;
His heart's demand had grown immeasurable:
His single freedom could not satisfy,
Her light, her bliss he asked for earth and men.
But vain are human power and human love
To break earth's seal of ignorance and death;
His nature's might seemed now an infant's grasp;
Heaven is too high for outstretched hands to seize.
This Light comes not by struggle or by thought;
In the mind's silence the Transcendent acts
And the hushed heart hears the unuttered Word.
A vast surrender was his only strength.
A Power that lives upon the heights must act,
Bring into life's closed room the Immortal's air
And fill the finite with the Infinite.
All that denies must be torn out and slain
And crushed the many longings for whose sake
We lose the One for whom our lives were made.
Now other claims had hushed in him their cry:
Only he longed to draw her presence and power
Into his heart and mind and breathing frame;
Only he yearned to call for ever down
Her healing touch of love and truth and joy
Into the darkness of the suffering world.
His soul was freed and given to her alone.

SRI AUROBINDO

*The Supreme Will**

IN the light of this progressive manifestation of the Spirit, first apparently bou in the Ignorance, then free in the power and wisdom of the Infinite, we c better understand the great and crowning injunction of the Gita to the Karm yogin, "Abandoning all dharmas, all principles and laws and rules of conduct, ta refuge in Me alone." All standards and rules are temporary constructions found upon the needs of the ego in its transition from Matter to Spirit. These makeshi have a relative imperativeness so long as we rest satisfied in the stages of transitio content with the physical and vital life, attached to the mental movement, or ev fixed in the ranges of the mental plane that are touched by the spiritual lustr But beyond is the unwalled wideness of a supramental infinite consciousness a there all temporary structures cease. It is not possible to enter utterly into t spiritual truth of the Eternal and Infinite if we have not the faith and courage trust ourselves into the hands of the Lord of all things and the Friend of all cre tures and leave utterly behind us our mental limits and measures. At one mome we must plunge without hesitation, reserve or fear or scruple into the ocean the free, the infinite, the Absolute. After the Law, Liberty; after the person after the general, after the universal standards there is something greater, t impersonal plasticity, the divine freedom, the transcendent force and the superr impulse. After the strait path of the ascent the wide plateaus on the summit.

There are three stages of the ascent,—at the bottom the bodily life enslaved the pressure of necessity and desire, in the middle the mental, the higher emotio and psychic rule that feels after greater interests, aspirations, experiences, ide and at the summits first a deeper psychic and spiritual state and then a supram tal eternal consciousness in which all our aspirations and seekings discover th own intimate significance. In the bodily life first desire and need and th the practical good of the individual and the society are the governing conside tion, the dominant force. In the mental life ideas and ideals rule, ideas that a half-lights wearing the garb of Truth, ideals formed by the mind as a result o growing but still imperfect intuition and experience. Whenever the mental l prevails and the bodily diminishes its brute insistence, man the mental bei feels pushed by the urge of mental Nature to mould in the sense of the idea or t ideal the life of the individual, and in the end even the vaguer more comp life of the society is forced to undergo this subtle process. In the spiritual life, when a higher power than Mind has manifested and taken possession of the natu these limited motive-forces recede, dwindle, tend to disappear. The spiritual supramental Self, the Divine Being, the supreme and immanent Reality, must alone the Lord within us and shape freely our final development according to highest, widest, most integral expression possible of the law of our nature. In end that nature acts in the perfect Truth and its spontaneous freedom; for it ob only the luminous power of the Eternal. The individual has nothing farther gain, no desire to fulfil; he has become a portion of the impersonality or the univ sal personality of the Eternal. No other object than the manifestation and play the Divine Spirit in life and the maintenance and conduct of the world in its ma

* The Synthesis of Yoga. Chapter VIII. (Revised)

ards the divine goal can move him to action. Mental ideas, opinions, construc-
is are his no more; for his mind has fallen into silence, it is only a channel for
Light and Truth of the divine knowledge. Ideals are too narrow for the vastness
is spirit; it is the ocean of the Infinite that flows through him and moves him
ever.

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Whoever sincerely enters the path of works, must leave behind him the stage
vhich need and desire are the first law of our acts. For whatever desires still
ible his being, he must, if he accepts the high aim of Yoga, put them away from
into the hands of the Lord within us. The supreme power will deal with them
the good of the sadhaka and for the good of all. In effect, we find that once this
render is done,—always provided the rejection is sincere,—egoistic indulgence
lesire may for some time recur under the continued impulse of past nature but
in order to exhaust its acquired momentum and to teach the embodied being
is most unteachable part, his nervous, vital, emotional nature, by the reactions
esire, by its grief and unrest bitterly contrasted with calm periods of the higher
ce or marvellous movements of divine Ananda, that egoistic desire is not a law
the soul that seeks liberation or aspires to its own original god-nature. Afterwards
element of desire in those impulsions will be thrown away or persistently elimi-
ed by a constant denying and transforming pressure. Only the pure force of
on in them (*pravṛtti*) justified by an equal delight in all work and result that is
ired or imposed from above will be preserved in the happy harmony of a final
fection. To act, to enjoy is the normal law and right of the nervous being;
to choose by personal desire its action and enjoyment is only its ignorant will,
its right. Alone the supreme and universal Will must choose; action must change
a dynamic movement of that Will; enjoyment must be replaced by the play of
ire spiritual Ananda. All personal will is either a temporary delegation from on
n or a usurpation by the ignorant Asura.

The social law, that second term of our progress, is a means to which the ego
ubjected in order that it may learn discipline by subordination to a wider col-
ive ego. This law may be quite empty of any moral content and may express
the needs or the practical good of the society as each society conceives it. Or
ay express those needs and that good, but modified and coloured and supple-
ted by a higher moral or ideal law. It is binding on the developing but not
perfectly developed individual in the shape of social duty, family obligation,
munal or national demand, so long as it is not in conflict with his growing sense
he higher Right. But the sadhaka of the Karmayoga will abandon this also to
Lord of works. After he has made this surrender, his social impulses and judge-
ts will, like his desires, only be used for their exhaustion or, it may be, so far as
are still necessary for a time to enable him to identify his lower mental nature
n mankind in general or with any grouping of mankind in its works and hopes
aspirations. But after that brief time is over, they will be withdrawn and a
ne government will alone abide. He will be identified with the Divine and
n others only through the divine consciousness and not through the mental
ire.

For, even after he is free, the sadhaka will be in the world and to be in the
ld is to remain in works. But to remain in works without desire is to act for the
d of the world in general or for the kind or the race or for some new creation to

be evolved on the earth or some work imposed by the Divine Will within him. A this must be done either in the framework provided by the environment or grouping in which he is born or placed or else in one which is chosen or creat for him by a divine direction. Therefore in our perfection there must be nothi left in the mental being which conflicts with or prevents our sympathy and f self-identification with the kind, the group or whatever collective expression the Divine he is meant to lead, help or serve. But in the end it must become a f self-identification through identity with the Divine and not a mental bond moral tie of union or a vital association dominated by any kind of personal, soc national, communal or credal egoism. If any social law is obeyed, it will not from physical necesstiy or from the sense of personal or general interest or expediency or because of the pressure of the environment or from any sense duty, but solely for the sake of the Lord of Works and because it is felt known to be the divine Will that the social law or rule or relation as it stands still be kept as a figure of the inner life and the minds of men must not be disturb by its infringement. If on the other hand the social law or rule or relation disregarded, that too will not be for the indulgence of desire, personal will or p sonal opinion, but because a greater rule is felt that expresses the law of the Sp or because it is known that there must be in the march of the divine All-Wil movement towards the changing, exceeding or abolition of existing laws and for for the sake of a freer larger life necessary to the world's progress.

There is still left the moral law or the ideal and these, even to many who thi themselves free, appear for ever sacred and intangible. But the sadhaka, his g turned always to the heights, will abandon them to Him whom all ideals seek imp fectly and fragmentarily to express; all moral qualities are only a poor and ri travesty of his spontaneous and illimitable perfection. The bondage to sin a evil passes away with the passing of nervous desire; for it belongs to the quality vital passion, impulsion or drive of propensity in us (*rajoguṇa*) and is extinguish with the transformation of that mode of Nature. But neither must aspirant remain subject to the gilded or golden chain of a conventional o habitual or a mentally ordered or even a high or clear sattwic virtue. That will replaced by something profounder and more essential than the minor inadequ thing that men call virtue. The original sense of the word was manhood and t is a much larger and deeper thing than the moral mind and its structures. T culmination of Karmayoga is a yet higher and deeper state that may perhaps called "soulhood"—for the soul is greater than the man; a free soulhood spon neously welling out in works of a supreme Truth and Love will replace hum virtue. But this supreme Truth cannot be forced to inhabit the petty edifi of the practical reason or even confined in the more dignified constructions of larger ideative reason that imposes its representations as if they were pure tr on the limited human intelligence. This supreme Love will not necessarily consistent, much less will it be synonymous, with the partial and feeble, ignor and emotion-ridden movements of human attraction, sympathy and pity. T petty law cannot bind the vaster movement; the mind's partial attainment can dictate its terms to the soul's supreme fulfilment.

At first, the higher Love and Truth will fulfil its movement in the sadh according to the essential law or way of his own nature. For that is the spe aspect of the divine Nature, the particular power of the supreme Shakti, ou which his soul has emerged into the Play,—not limited indeed by the forms of law or way, for the soul is infinite. But still its stuff of nature bears that sta

ves fluently along those lines or turns around the spiral curves of that dominat- influence. He will manifest the divine Truth-movement according to the perament of the sage or the lion-like fighter or the lover and enjoyer or the ker and servant or in any combination of essential attributes (gunas) that may titute the form given to his being by its own inner urge. It is this self-nature ng freely in his acts which men will see in him and not a conduct cut, ked out, artificially regulated by any lesser rule or by any law from outside. But there is a yet higher attainment, there is an infinity (*ānantya*) in which this last limitation is exceeded, because the nature is utterly fulfilled and its daries vanish. There the soul lives without any boundaries; for it uses all s and moulds according to the divine Will in it, but it is not restrained, it is ied down, it is not imprisoned in any power or form that it uses. This is the mit of the path of works and this the utter liberty of the soul in its actions. eality, it has there no actions; for all its activites are a rhythm of the reme and sovereignly proceed from That alone like a spontaneous music out ne Infinite.

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The total surrender, then, of all our actions to a supreme and universal Will, nconditioned and standardless surrender of all works to the government of ething eternal within us which will replace the ordinary working of the ego- re, is the way and end of Karmayoga. But what is this divine supreme Will how can it be recognised by our deluded instruments and our blind prisoned ligence?

Ordinarily, we conceive of ourselves as a separate "I" in the universe that rns a separate body and mental and moral nature, chooses in full liberty its self-determined actions and is independent and therefore sole master of its s and responsible. It is not easy for the ordinary mind, the mind that has not ght nor looked deeply into its own constitution and constituents, it is difficult for minds that have thought but have no spiritual vision and experience, to ine how there can be anything else in us truer, deeper and more powerful this apparent "I" and its empire. But the very first step towards self-know- e as towards the true knowledge of phenomena is to get behind the apparent of things and find the real but masked essential and dynamic truth which appearances cover.

This ego or "I" is not a lasting truth, much less our essential part; it is only mation of Nature, a mental form of thought centralisation in the perceiving liscriminating mind, a vital form of the centralisation of feeling and sensation ir parts of life, a form of physical conscious reception centralising substance unction of substance in our bodies. All that we internally are is not ego, but ciousness, soul or spirit. All that we externally and superficially are and do, t ego but Nature. An executive cosmic force shapes us and dictates through emperament and environment and mentality so shaped, through our indivi- sed formulation of the cosmic energies, our actions and their results. Truly, o not think, will or act but thought occurs in us, will occurs in us, impulse ct occur in us; our ego-sense gathers around itself, refers to itself all this flow tural activities. It is cosmic Force, it is Nature that forms the thought, imposes ill, imparts the impulse. Our body, mind and ego are a wave of that sea of

force in action and do not govern it but by it are governed and directed. T sadhaka in his progress towards truth and self-knowledge must come to a po where the soul opens its eyes of vision and recognises this truth of ego and t truth of works. He gives up the idea of a mental, vital, physical "I" that acts governs action; he recognises that Prakriti, Force of cosmic nature following fixed modes, is in him and in all things and creatures the one and only work

But what has fixed the modes of Nature? Or who has originated and gove the movements of Force? There is a Consciousness—or a Conscient—beh that is the lord, witness, knower, enjoyer, upholder and source of sanction for works; this consciousness is Soul or Purusha. Prakriti shapes the action in Purusha in her or behind her witnesses, assents, bears and upholds it. Prak forms the thought in our minds; Purusha in her or behind her knows the thou and the truth in it. Prakriti determines the result of the action; Purusha in her behind her enjoys or suffers the consequence. Prakriti forms mind and bo labours over them, develops them; Purusha upholds the formation and evolut and sanctions each step of her works. Prakriti applies the Will-force which wo in things and men; Purusha sets that Will-force to work by his vision of that wh should be done. This Purusha is not the surface ego, but a silent Self, a source Power, an originator and receiver of Knowledge behind the ego. Our mental is only a false reflection of this Self, this Power, this Knowledge. This Purusha supporting Consciousness is therefore the cause, recipient and support of Nature's works, but is not himself the doer. Prakriti, Nature-Force, in front Shakti, Conscious-Force, Soul-Force behind her,—for these two are the inner outer faces of the universal Mother,—account for all that is done in the unive The universal Mother, Prakriti-Shakti, is the one and only worker.

Purusha-Prakriti, Consciousness-Force, Soul supporting Nature,—for two even in their separation are one and inseparable,—are at once a universal a transcendent Power. But there is something in the individual too which is the mental ego, something that is one in essence with this greater reality: it pure reflection or portion of the one Purusha; it is the Soul, Person or the embod being, the individual self, Jivatman; it is the Self that seems to limit its power knowledge so as to support an individual play of transcendent and universal Natu In deepest reality the infinitely One is also infinitely multiple; we are not onl reflection or part of That but we are That; our spiritual individuality unlike ego does not preclude our universality and transcendence. But at present the s or self in us intent on individualisation in Nature allows itself to be confused w the idea of the ego; it has to get rid of this ignorance, it has to know itself a reflection or portion or being of the supreme and universal Self and solely a cen of its consciousness in the world-action. But this Jiva Purusha too is not the d of works any more than the ego or the supporting consciousness of the Witn and Knower. Again and always it is the transcendent and universal Shakti wh the sole doer. But behind her is the one Supreme who manifests through he the dual power, Purusha-Prakriti, Ishwara-Shakti*. The Supreme beco

* Ishwara-Shakti is not quite the same as Purusha-Prakriti; for Purusha and Prakriti separate powers, but Ishwara and Shakti contain each other. Ishwara is Purusha who cont Prakriti and rules by the power of the Shakti within him. Shakti is Prakriti ensouled Purusha and acts by the will of the Ishwara which is her own will and whose presence in movement she carries always with her. The Purusha-Prakriti realisation is of the first utili the seeker on the Way of Works; for it is the separation of the conscient being and the En and the subjection of the being to the mechanism of the Energy that are the efficient caus

namic as the Shakti and is by her the sole originator and Master of works the universe.

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If this is the truth of works, the first thing the sadhaka has to do is to recoil m the egoistic forms of activity and get rid of the sense of an "I" that acts. He to see and feel that everything happens in him by the plastic conscious or sub- nscious or sometimes superconscious automatism of his mental and bodily truments moved by the forces of spiritual, mental, vital and physical Nature. ere is a personality on his surface that chooses and wills, submits and struggles, es to make good in Nature or prevail over Nature, but this personality is itself a nstruction of Nature and so dominated, driven, determined by her that it cannot free. It is a formation or expression of the Self in her,—it is a self of nature her than a self of Self, his natural and processive, not his spiritual and perma- nt being, a temporary constructed personality, not the true immortal Person. is that Person that he must become. He must succeed in being inwardly quie- nt, detach himself as the observer from the outer active personality and learn e play of the cosmic forces in him by standing back from all blinding absorption its turns and movements. Thus calm, detached, a student of himself and a ness of his nature, he realises that he is the individual soul who observes the rks of Nature, accepts tranquilly her results and sanctions or withholds his nction from the impulse to her acts. At present this soul or Purusha is little more n an acquiescent spectator, influencing perhaps the action and development of e being by the pressure of its veiled consciousness, but for the most part delegat- g its powers or a fragment of them to the outer personality,—in fact to Nature, this outer self is not lord but subject to her, *anīś*; but, once unveiled, it can make sanction or refusal effective, become the master of the action, dictate sovereignly hange of Nature. Even if for a long time, as there sult of fixed association and past rage of energy, the habitual movement takes place independent of the Purusha's ent and even if the sanctioned movement is persistently refused by Nature for want past habit, still he will discover that in the end his assent or refusal prevails,— wly with much resistance or quickly with a rapid accommodation of her means d tendencies,—she modifies herself and her workings in the direction indicated his inner sight or volition. Thus he learns in place of mental control or egoistic ll an inner spiritual control which makes him master of the nature-forces that rk in him and not their unconscious instrument or mechanic slave. Above and ound him is the Shakti, the universal Mother and from her he can get all his most soul needs and wills if only he has a true knowledge of her ways and a true rrender to the divine Will in her. Finally, he becomes aware of that highest namic Self within him and within Nature which is the source of all his seeing d knowing, the source of the sanction, the source of the acceptance, the source the rejection. This is the Lord, the Supreme, the One in all, Ishwara-Shakti,

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r ignorance and imperfection; by this realisation the being can liberate himself from the echanical action of the nature and become free and arrive at a first spiritual control over the ture. Ishwara-Shakti stands behind the relation of Purusha-Prakriti and its ignorant action d turns it to an evolutionary purpose. The Ishwara-Shakti realisation can bring participation a higher dynamism and a divine working and a total unity and harmony of the being in a iritual nature.

of whom his soul is a portion, a being of that Being and a power of that Pow
The rest of our progress depends on our knowledge of the ways in which the Lo
of works manifests His Will in the world and in us and executes them through t
transcendent and universal Shakti.

The Lord sees in His omniscience the thing that has to be done. This seei
is His Will, it is a form of creative Power, and that which He sees the all-conscio
Mother, one with Him, takes into her dynamic self and embodies, and executi
Nature-Force carries it out as the mechanism of their omnipotent omniscien
But this vision of what is to be and therefore of what is to be done arises out of t
very being, pours directly out of the consciousness and delight of existen
of the Lord, spontaneously, like light from the sun. It is not our mor
attempt to see, our difficult arrival at truth of action and motive or just dema
of Nature. When the individual soul is entirely at one in its being a
knowledge with the Lord and directly in touch with the original Shakti, the tra
cendent Mother, the supreme Will can then arise in us too in the high divi
manner as a thing that must be and is achieved by the spontaneous action
Nature. There is then no desire, no responsibility, no reaction; all takes place
the peace, calm, light, power of the supporting and enveloping and inhabiti
Divine.

But even before that highest approach to identity is achieved, something
the supreme Will can manifest in us as an imperative impulsion, a God-driv
action; we then act by a spontaneous self-determining Force but a fuller knowled
of meaning and aim arises only afterwards. Or the impulse to action may come
an inspiration or intuition, but rather in the heart and body than in the mind; he
an effective sight enters in but the complete and exact knowledge is still defer
and comes, if at all, later. But the divine Will may descend too as a lumino
single command or a total perception or a continuous current of perception of wh
is to be done into the will or into the thought or as a direction from above spon
neously fulfilled by the lower members. When the Yoga is imperfect, only so
actions can be done in this way, or else a general action may so proceed but or
during periods of exaltation and illumination. When the Yoga is perfect, all acti
becomes of this character. We may indeed distinguish three stages of a growi
progress by which, first, the personal will is occasionally or frequently enlighten
or moved by a supreme Will or conscious Force beyond it, then constantly replac
and, last, identified and merged in that divine Power-action. The first is the sta
when we are still governed by the intellect, heart and senses; these have to seek
wait for the divine inspiration and guidance and do not always find or receive
The second is the stage when human intelligence is more and more replaced by
high illumined or intuitive spiritualised mind, the external human heart by t
inner psychic heart, the senses by a purified and selfless vital force. The thi
is the stage when we rise even above spiritualised mind to the supramental leve

In all three stages the fundamental character of the liberated action is t
same, a spontaneous working of Prakriti no longer through or for the ego but
the will and for the enjoyment of the supreme Purusha. At a higher level th
becomes the Truth of the absolute and universal Supreme expressed through t
individual soul and worked out consciously through the nature,—no long
through a half perception and a diminished or distorted effectuation by the stum
ling, ignorant and all-deforming energy of lower nature in us but by the all-w
transcendent and universal Mother. The Lord has veiled Himself and his abs
lute wisdom and eternal consciousness in ignorant Nature-Force and suffers h

drive the individual being, with its complicity, as the ego; this lower action of ature continues to prevail, often even in spite of man's half-lit imperfect efforts a nobler motive and a purer self-knowledge. Our human effort at perfection ls, or progresses very incompletely, owing to the force of Nature's past actions us, her past formations, her long-rooted associations; it turns towards a true d high-climbing success only when a greater Knowledge or Power than our own eaks through the lid of our ignorance and guides or takes up our personal will. r our human will is a misled and wandering ray that has parted from the preme Puissance. The period of slow emergence out of this lower working into higher light and purer force is the valley of the shadow of death for the striver er perfection; it is a dreadful passage full of trials, sufferings, sorrows, obscura-ns, stumblings, errors, pitfalls. To abridge and alleviate this ordeal or to pene-ate it with the divine delight faith is necessary, an increasing surrender of the mind the knowledge that imposes itself from within and, above all, a true aspiration d a right and unfaltering and sincere practice. "Practice unfalteringly" says the ita, "with a heart free from despondency, the Yoga;" for even though in the rlier stage of the path we drink deep of the bitter poison of internal discord and ffering, the last taste of this cup is the sweetness of the nectar of immortality d the honey-wine of an eternal Ananda.

SRI AUROBINDO

Spirituality and the Modern World

(Continued)

II

a widening of consciousness is the leading tendency of modern thought, nd if spirituality is its hidden goal, how can one reconcile this high endeavour th the actual chaos and blindness of the present day? Religion, as we can see, powerless in its present decaying condition to guide man further; and it is gnificant too that modern science is becoming more self-conscious of its own ability to provide a sure and powerful way out of this impasse. The science of the past certainly felt more sure of itself in this respect. It had given man a und knowledge of the material basis of life, the biological process and of evo-ion, as well as an insight into the psychology of ethics and behaviour. But ough this quest was important as a basic need of man, its exclusive stress outward phenomena only led to a complete neglect of man's inner and iritual life. And from that exclusive preoccupation arose the belief that the aterial means alone could effect the next evolutionary step for the race. The tcome of that endeavour, as we now see, shows how futile it really was towards hieving the radical change and transformation which this step demands. By ving ignored, in the past, the supreme importance of his inner being, the ality behind the veil of his surface consciousness—the subliminal and soul-ing, as well as that which is above (the Truth-plane)—modern man now finds nself oblivious of the Supreme Reality, the Divine, Who is his very source

and sustainer. For he has completely shut out the fact that the soul of m as it has been realised by spiritual path-finders of all times, is indeed the w spark or seed-flame of the Divine. It is through this separation from the Lig erected by man himself that has sprung all the obscurity and blindness so c racteristic of the modern age. From this point of view we can see that it is c by severing that veil of ignorance that the way of linking man's deepest urge w the higher Light can be realised. And this implies the awakening of soul to own supreme stature. For it is soul alone that can penetrate the darkness reveal to man the integral Truth which at present is only partially and sepa tively opening to him through his highest endeavours of thought.

It is significant to see how modern science is now turning inwards gradually revealing something of the hidden working in and behind Natu something of the inner Universal movement. Thus behind the physical world our ordinary awareness there is already exposed a more subtle physical realm the intraphysical—which has an intricate atomic movement, not entirely mec nical or predictable. Its indeterminacy seems to point to some inherent qua akin to a rudimentary will or even a dimmed suppressed consciousness of own (quite apart in its complexity from man's own consciousness). The at is now revealed to be an immensely concentrated dynamis compressed in collectivity into apparent staticity. The cosmic nature of the force libera from its splitting is in itself a potent indication of the concealed Dynamis wit it. And there has also been strikingly revealed, in the smallest grain of ma as well as in the largest system of the physical universe, the self-same des and working, the same hidden force within as well as behind. In the biolog sciences also there have been discovered beneath the outer phenomena of l a world of organisation, a complex interrelation of parts working as a harmoni whole, and at the centre, as the basic life-structure, the living cell. Altho each cell is itself a complex individual unit, the collectivity of the organism fu tions in perfect co-ordination as though not only obeying one supreme Law Consciousness, but also that some immanent principle had inspired each with the exact knowledge for the carrying out of a preconceived Design similar inward turn is also apparent in the psychological field which is all more obvious since man is pre-eminently the mental being. Already below surface of man's ordinary consciousness, there has been unfolded a vast s conscious depth. And below the subconscious, the Unconscious,—the lo levels of mind where individuality and personality apparently merge into archaic racial consciousness representing the whole past of man.

Another tendency of modern science, apart from the inward turn but p ceeding simultaneously with it, is the effort towards a synthesis. This manif itself as a gathering together of all the strands of thought into one wh —as though preparing for a greater step forward. In all branches of thou there is the similar endeavour to correlate the separate entities, such as mat life and mind, into a larger unity,—the unity of Reality itself. Whereas in past, each branch of science had attempted to maintain a strictly indepen existence, in which the one strove against the others to prove itself the fun mental reality and basis of all things, the new outlook aims more towards integration. Thus matter, as it is now being explained by physical science not the whole but merely the surface of our existence, and so the material en alone cannot give us the real purpose and meaning of all the hidden com movement that is being revealed in it. It is forced more and more to call in

r entities, either life or latterly mind, to explain many of the inconsistencies being exposed therein. It is the same in modern psychology where the gration of man himself is sought, as the pressing need of the times. And pursuit of the Whole Man, in recent works, is the expression of this urgent ssity.

But the results of all this endeavour—the inward seeking and quest for thesis—are not commensurate with the higher goal modern thought sets out chieve. In the first place, the inner probing has taken a definite downward rse, as is shown by the gross distorted application of knowledge, with all ttendant decadence and darkness. And secondly there is not only the failure each a true synthesis, but there is even a greater sundering and disruption hought into a babel of many tongues, where each investigator employs a private guage and terminology of his own. The whole trend of this failure is perhaps t clearly seen in the subjective investigations of psychology. By its excessive bing into the dark subconscious, modern psychology has completely dis- rded the existence of any higher planes of mind, especially the luminous itive levels. And it is, in fact, the intuitive mind which reveals the more gral vision and wholeness for which man is now groping in the depths. But t is even more fundamental is his ignoring of the Spirit Principle—the entity ve and beyond mind—and its direct representation in man himself, as the centre of his being.

The creative arts also display the self-same trends, and being more of an vidual expression they reveal these tendencies even more decisively. Both dern art and literature, with their deliberate self-conscious efforts to create ew vision, that of an interior seeing and expression, openly expose man's er search into the Unknown. But it is clear that the resultant works, in spite ll the striving towards the higher ideal of Word or Image, present a very and distorted picture. Thus, for example, the "interior monologue" and ealist experiments of modern literature and art, in their quest for an inner ity, have become too greatly engulfed and obscured by their own subjectivity ise to any higher flights of creative expression. Like contemporary psychology modernist movement, in taking the inward turn, has also taken the downward ge. And it fails to realise too, that the subconscious depth is but fragment e lowest in fact—of the subliminal consciousness of man, and that even ind the subliminal, secreted within the very heart of it, is the true soul of n. In this way the whole movement has become a plunge into Night and kness in which the higher Light and soul are completely shut out. Thus whole of modern thought and endeavour is becoming increasingly chaotic obscure, regardless even of its own threatened disruption.

That the present age is being urged towards the emergence of soul in the vidual is implicit in the whole movement of the Dynamic Spirit as it expresses lf through the evolutionary process. For evolution is in its essential principle struggle of soul through matter, life, mind,—and beyond towards an ultimate -emergence. At first, in the material creation, the descent of the Dynamic rit into Matter was a transformation of Itself into an infinite number of atoms, rough a condensation process, as science says. The atom thus became the damental and basic centre of the physical world,—the soul of matter, we might The creation of matter, as the very basis of our terrestrial life, represents the rmost transformation, or rather materialisation, of the Transcendent silence ve into rock and stone below. Thus the first act of the material creation was

the imprisoning, apparently for ever, of the Dynamic Consciousness within immutable silence and fixity. But this could not be the end of the evolution process.

It is with the appearance of Life that we begin to discern the Dynamic C sciousness emerging and identifying itself with the outer form of the mate mould; each life-form becoming a separative organism, and each organism it the combination of individually constituted cells. Whereas matter revealed apparent purpose in its existence, in the life process we begin to discern a purpo development,—that the seed for example, has inherent within it the exact b form and character of the future organism. In the plant there is as yet the utm limitation imposed on the emerging dynamic force. In the animal however, w the first rudimentary glimmer of mind, there is the display of a freer moven which characterises animal from plant-life. It is this greater freedom of movem in fact, that is the keynote of the newly emerging entity mind, of which man i fullest and dominant expression. The evolution of man from the primitive to cultural state, is the growth from the instinctive to the self-conscious. Man t becomes aware of himself existing, the reflective power of mind turns him inw to regard and become aware of an inner self which he first discerns as the "I" ego. As mind becomes more operative in man opening him to higher plane thought, he gradually becomes cognisant of a deeper entity beyond the ego soul. It is this critical juncture in the evolutionary process that marks the s from the cultural to the spiritual man. Where primitive man was characterise instinct, and cultural man by a self-consciousness, the spiritual man is cha terised by an emerging soul-consciousness. It is this emergence of the spiri man that we recognise to be the central and dominating factor in and behind present critical struggle of modern man, and which constitutes in fact the crisis of the modern world. In the midst of this struggle of an evolving sou manifest itself and take the lead, man must either open to and become aware of growing entity, or else be submerged by the oncoming tide of the evolutio force.

We can now see how the atom of matter gave way to the living cell wit itself becoming annihilated, and how the cell in turn became subordinated to new mental centre ego, so in the same way the ego must itself now open to surrender its domination and sense of individuality to the emerging conscious of a higher being in man. It is this emerging soul—or psychic being—that is struggling to become the nucleus of a new and higher Personality, of which Seer or Liberated Man of the past,—one who has completely transcended mental confines of ego—is the representative type. But the spiritual is not emergent, a thing still to come. It is, in its own higher status, above mind, nally self-existent in the World of Light or Truth-Plane. And it is precisely bec the spiritual factor is already there, above, as it has been thus seen from the ea dawn of man's higher conscious awareness, that the reign of mind cannot be end of the evolutionary movement. The descent of this higher Principle inevitably be the consummation of man's struggle if he prepares himself opens to this highest Truth.

It is a significant factor also of this modern age that the knowledge whi so urgently needed for healing the existing abyss of modern thought, has alr developed and is in fact emerging in all its fullness for the world. This is integral knowledge of India's dynamic spirituality. But because it is in its nature a secret soul-knowledge, it can only be fully recognised by an emer

ıl-faculty in man himself. Even as Greek thought lay dormant for centuries fore the European Renaissance, and was only fully appreciated and absorbed an intellectually awakened man, so Indian thought and spirituality to-day awaits soul-awakening of modern man. Eventually modern thought itself must turn d open to this higher and deeper knowledge. But the acceptance of this spiri- l knowledge by modern man does not at all imply a flight into some transcen- nt sphere beyond life and matter and mind, it does not mean a negation of life other-worldliness. This in fact was the fundamental error into which the reli- ous exclusiveness of medieval India fell (and medieval Europe also before the naissance). Through its very seclusion and hidden secrecy the whole of Indian lture seemed to sink into that obscurity whose outward characteristic of life- gation puts its stamp completely on the entire subsequent ortlook of Indian e and thought. But the Dynamic Spirituality that had persisted as an under- rrent from the remote times of the Vedas, would not be subdued . From those cient solitary heights through the whole period of India's spiritual develop- ent, the self-same line of dynamic spiritual endeavour has been operative, as it s successively revealed itself through Upanishad, Gita and Tantra. It has in a nse been a descent from the height of pure intuitive illumination, that could only realised in its plenitude by the initiated few, through a wider intellectual and scriminative level, until it spread to and embraced all who turned to the Divine, respective of class or creed. The tales and epics of the Puranas spread further is universal spirit over the whole of India, even reaching in her expansive age, Indonesia and Indo-China. The Tantras represent the spiritual essence of this ovement in its attempt to embrace all the diverse types and grades of humanity; ntil Tantra itself, by too steep a descent into the midst of life, degenerated into oss and exaggerated distortions. It was indeed during these medieval times that e whole dynamic spirituality seemed to be overwhelmed and vanquished by the gative recoil which then had gripped the whole of Indian thought. At least, it emed so, until the first shoots of the Renaissance appeared, and with it the ancient ynamism of the far-off Vedic Seers arose once more. As it is now clearly expressed y Sri Aurobindo, (the living representative of this ancient line of dynamic Seers), is the conscious aim of the newly-awakened spirituality, to realise the higher estiny and goal of man, and to transform human life itself into the Divine or upramental Life.

Dynamic spirituality, like the evolutionary force itself (since it is really the rowing-point of this force), demands the endeavour of wholeness, based on an ntegral knowledge and metaphysics. This must necessarily be, since the entire m of this dynamic movement is directed towards a transformation, a change in ne whole nature and status of man as he is at present. And the starting-point nust therefore be the Whole Man, towards which modern thought itself now aguely aims. But if the modern outlook really means to outgrow, effectively and ully, its present limitations, it must eventually turn towards and embrace this ow-emerging knowledge of dynamic spirituality.

N. PEARSON

The Message of Sri Aurobindo

THE teaching of the ancient sages of India affirms that behind the manifo and fleeting forms of the universe there stands a single reality, an existen infinite and eternal. All beings are united in this Being, but an illusion, a fund mental and original ignorance, veils their consciousness and they see themselv as so many individuals separate from one another. This separateness of consciou ness hides from them their true being, the one and eternal Self, and chains them their false being, the perishable ego, which is but a reflection thereof on the movi waves of the world of appearances.

The fact that the individual consciousness has for its essential reality t Self, implies that every man can rend the veil of separateness and regain perce tion of his identity with all beings and with the universe. The omnipresent S can be seen or felt in its integrality in each soul or in each form, but it is easier find it at first in one's own self. Those who have been through this experien have described the attributes of the one reality as Existence (Sat), Consciousne (Chit) and Bliss (Ananda). It is because this eternal existence sustains each livi being that it exists and lives. It is because this consciousness is in the depth each individual being that it is itself conscious and capable of feeling. It is becau this bliss resides deep down in the most miserable amongst us that he agrees a continues to live in this world of sorrow.

The entry into the supreme reality has been described as a union. It is t sense of the Sanskrit word "Yoga" that we use technically to designate it. It at one and the same time a union with the Self, a union with all beings and with t world, a union with the Being, one and transcendent, beyond all the worlds. O or the other of these experiences may predominate.

India is the country which has cultivated most extensively the psychologic discipline that enables man to emerge out of his primary ignorance in order acquire supreme knowledge. The same word "Yoga" designates this disciplin There are numerous traditional systems of Yoga. Hindu philosophy has alwa admitted that spiritual experience has perforce been the touchstone of its vario systems. Because of this fact it has remained more alive, even though at times its history it has likewise run the risk of being dried up in the midst of pure intellectual constructions.

But the teaching that precedes does not belong to India alone. Those w study mysticism, the living soul of religions, cannot fail to perceive the profou unity of its teaching. Religions differ; they have their dogmas, their rites, th codes, which vary according to culture, tradition, climate, geographical positio etc. But the mystics of all religions describe similar experiences and often identical terms; they have travelled over the same stages of the same path.

Moreover, spiritual union is not the privilege of religious souls alone. I numerable mystics belong to the borderland of orthodox religions; some have ev been burnt for it. Anyway it is not necessary to adhere to any particular religio belief in order to go through the experiences we are speaking of. Generally it the effect of the Yogic discipline. It can also arise spontaneously, as the result a movement of inner growth—of a flowering of the soul—following an inte aspiration towards truth, a painful moral crisis, a profound aesthetic emotio

is then often partial, sometimes just for once and without a morrow. It is cer-
in that a regular Yogic discipline, under the guidance of a qualified master, is
e best means of avoiding shocks, stoppages and catastrophes, and of assuring
spiritual development, progressive and continuous.

Spiritual experiences assume various forms according to the parts of the being
at are touched, according to individual idiosyncrasies and also according to
e depths already attained. There are thus numerous categories of spiritual
xperience; but as soon as we wish to speak of them, we find ourselves confronted
a difficulty. The terms that one uses to describe them have no meaning except
those who have experienced them: silence, peace, light, truth, eternity, unity,
ality. These words, even those that habitually carry an abstract sense, here
present inner experiences as concrete as are the objects of the physical world
our senses—even more so, for the perception is direct and immediate. As the
edic Rishis have said, words of the supreme wisdom have a meaning only for
ose who are already amongst the wise.

This difficulty of language is due to a profound cause. Modern civilisation
based on intelligence. The highest faculty of the man of our days is his reason.
e looks upon intelligence as an instrument of knowledge. But this is an error.
'e do not know anything by the intelligence. It cannot give us any certainty,
ny reply to the simplest of questions asked about God, the universe or our-
lves. Intelligence is a wonderful classifier and constructor. It presents to us
xplanations, comparisons and well-ordered systems. But these are only images
nd models of the reality, never a direct view, and immediate perception of that
eality. In order to convince ourselves of this it is enough to read modern
hysicists on the subject.

Intelligence is an instrument of action. By it man can seize the beings and
rces of nature, and can adjust, organise, handle and utilise them to his ends.
hat is why man, the mental being, the thinker, even if he truly knows nothing
f the reality, has nevertheless acquired considerable power over phenomenal
ature. The contrast is significant.

A consequence of this fact is that true knowledge cannot dawn except when
ur intelligence has entered into silence and become quiet. That is why mental
uietude plays such an important part in Yoga.

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A fundamental spiritual experience is always a change of consciousness.
ven when it occurs just once, it is decisive, because the soul is never the same
before. It has experienced a new birth, a birth out of the world of ignorance
nto the world of knowledge.

Man is born anew, he is born of the spirit.

The contrast thus perceived between the world we live in, the domain of
norance, of obscurity, of falsehood, of suffering and of death, and the world
f underlying reality, where reign truth, light, beatitude and the life eternal,
aturally leads one to consider these worlds as fundamentally separate and irre-
nciliable. The intellect ever inclined to put up trenchant distinctions between
ings and to transform these distinctions into oppositions, will fetch up there-
om a support for its own dualistic views. It will declare eternal opposition
etween spirit and matter, between Purusha (Spirit, silent witness) and Prakriti

(Nature, active and creative), between Brahman and Maya (cosmic illusion) between God and the world.

From there it is but one step to look upon this world as irremediably evi Most mystics and ascetics have taken that step. For them our world is either place of trial where we have been placed by an arbitrary decree of God, an where our conduct will decide our future life, or a phantasmagoria without rea existence, an evil dream from which we must wake up as soon as possible, o in fine, a sort of cosmic snare, to which we are glued from birth to birth by desir born of ignorance.

One or the other of these points of view leads us to seek our liberation ou side the world or far from the world. In order to withdraw from this world her one must concentrate on the other, and give to this one the bare minimum o attention. The positive side of the discipline will then be an exclusive concen tration on the supreme reality, whatever be the name we give it. Moreover, a the bonds that enchain man here below, or keep him in ignorance, are desire the logical line of conduct would be throw back far away the objects of desi or to withdraw one's self at a distance from them, to refuse all food to desi so that it may wither and die. This is the negative side of the discipline.

Some have well felt how little satisfying is the conception that the univers appears to exist only for us to escape from, or that it is a simple illusio a dream which exists merely in the mind of the dreamer, or even that it is sort of torture chamber created by a God who is nevertheless supposed to b kind and all-powerful. Certainly, to see the universe such as it is, one woul easily veer to the opinion that if God is kind He is not all-powerful, and tha if He is all-powerful He is not kind.

On the other hand, these views of the world, pushed to their ultimate con clusions, would inevitably lead to an atrophy of the faculties of expression an to the renunciation of the domination over matter. All activity has the charact of a bondage, for one does not see that there can be any activity urged by augh but desire—except for helping other men to attain illumination and to escap from the world in their turn. It is then a negation of artistic creation, of scient fic knowledge, of a greater mastery over nature and of a better organisatio economic and social.

This negation goes against some of the profoundest tendencies of the rac tendencies that cannot possibly be obliterated. A reconciliation is undoubted necessary between them and the other pole of human idealism,—aspiratio towards the eternal and immutable reality.

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It is here that Sri Aurobindo, in taking up again and pushing to their logic end the thoughts and experiences of the Vedic Rishis and in completing the and developing them by his own personal experiences, has brought before us new urge towards the spiritual life of humanity.

The Supreme is at once the One and the Many; He is simultaneously imm nent and transcendent; He is at once personal and impersonal: and yet He beyond all these formulations. Each religion, each system has seized one aspe of the Absolute and set it up as the sole truth. But every aspect is true, relative and partially, and is false when it puts itself in opposition to others. It is a gre

tragedy that the understanding of man cannot seize any particular truth without putting it at once in opposition to its counter-truth, which is as true as itself. As soon as one rises above the discursive intellect, one realises the fallacious character of these oppositions. The antinomies are only problems set forth badly, pseudo-problems. Even science has recently encountered remarkable examples of such problems, which have given painful shocks to many hardened spirits; the material space, finite but without limits; light, at once undulatory and corpuscular in its nature; matter, identical with energy.

Nothing exists but the Supreme. If He is all, He is all the contraries, all the opposites, even while He remains the Absolute and is beyond everything. All that exists has come out of Him, remains in Him, remains Himself. The separation is only an appearance. It is He who lives, feels and thinks behind a limited consciousness in all beings. This limitation of the supreme consciousness, its burial in matter in order to evolve a complex universe by a progressive development of the powers of this consciousness, is the key to the universe. Matter itself is not anti-divine. It is the same in substance as in consciousness; it is a concretisation thereof. In a way, matter is spirit condensed; there is no essential difference between the two, all the powers of the spirit are buried, asleep in matter. The aim of evolution is to reveal them, to manifest them.

If that is so, the world is not the contrary of God, it is not a place from which God is absent. He is here, present all over. It is He that lives, feels and suffers in every one of us and who, in us and through us, reveals progressively His attributes: beauty, knowledge, power and love. The world is not a creation out of nothing, outside of God; it is not an illusion destitute of reality (even though the view that we have of it be necessarily limited and false); no more is it a place of trial wherein created beings have been placed in order to expiate a fault that they have never committed. It is rather a field of experiment where one of the innumerable possibilities that exist potentially in the infinite is elaborating itself on a gigantic scale. No doubt other worlds exist, have existed or will exist, that will unfold other such possibilities. This world of ours is not the only one of its kind.

Our universe bears the stamp of separatism. This initial cleavage in the consciousness has permitted the multiplicity of individual centres thereof. Separation has brought about the illusion of freedom; it has also by the loss of global knowledge and a lack of comprehensive vision brought about ignorance. This freedom and this ignorance imply the possibility of self-deception, and consequently error, weakness, opposition, disharmony,—in one word, evil. Evil is the price paid for apparent liberty, for the illusion that the individual has of being separate from all and of having the power to oppose all. This illusion is, no doubt, necessary for a time; it marks a stage in the development of the consciousness of self. By it, the cosmic realisation will attain a depth, richness, a power which would not otherwise have existed. The fall into the abyss will have permitted the conquest of the highest summits.

As all movement of consciousness has inevitably to develop all its consequences and to bear its fruits, separative ignorance has reaped an ample harvest thereof,—falsehood, hatred, sorrow, death.....But these attributes have not an inevitable character at all. They are the consequences of a veil, of a limitation of consciousness and are not attached to the material universe in itself. They will then disappear with the tearing of the veil and the re-establishment of consciousness in its integrality. The harmony is possible here in the material world;

matter is capable of containing and of manifesting the glorious perfection of the spirit.

Thus understood, the actual imperfection of our world receives a satisfactory explanation. It is in reality transitory, tied to only a phase of cosmic development. The universe is not static, it is essentially dynamic, in constant evolution, as much from the physical point of view as from the subtler view-point of consciousness. And this evolution has a direction; it aims towards a manifestation of the latent powers of consciousness. So that what appears to us as a negation of these powers (obscurity, falsehood, suffering, death) should, if this point of view be correct, be seen as a movement in retrogression.

That it is so, can, at the present moment, appear rather as an article of faith than as an ascertained fact. On the morrow of the severe trial that humanity has been through, face to face with the prospect of another war still more devastating, seeing in what chaos moral, intellectual, economic, political and artistic, man is struggling, is it possible to uphold the notion of a progress as vast and comprehensive as the one envisaged here? Nevertheless if we reflect, we shall agree that the first sign of any progress is a more pointed consciousness of its necessity, the first index that an imperfection can be overcome is that it hurts us more acutely. There have been at all times individuals who have realised to their sorrow the imperfect nature of this world; but they have ever been but few. Never has this imperfection been as apparent, as painfully felt by the greatest number as today. Never has an aspiration as sincere towards a better state of things been expressed so universally. At the same time it is being recognised that many of these imperfections regarded till now as irremediable, are not really so; freedom from physical needs, immunity from diseases, prolongation of life, these are no longer classed as utopian or impossible. A new sense of unity is becoming clear. Methods of scientific investigation reveal this unity in the domain of matter right up to the farthest limits of the universe. An economic interdependence joined to a greater proximity spatial (means of transport) and temporal (radio) carries this unity over into the domain of intelligent life. The globe has become too small and the methods of destruction too powerful to permit divisions and antagonisms to last much longer. It has become evident that mankind has perforce to become one or perish.

But it is not from a change of government, of the constitution or of the social system that man can expect a cure for his ills. The upsetting that is needed is of a deeper kind; it is a transformation of the consciousness that is called for. It is necessary for humanity to move on in this direction; it is imperative that at least a select few, who are capable of making themselves heard by others and followed by others, should go through this experience before a total reversal of values can establish itself, before a new ideal, creative of an entirely new civilisation, can surge forth. No system of philosophy, no religious revival, no social revolution can take the place of the necessary and inevitable spiritual transformation.

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The terrestrial evolution is realised by a double movement of descent and ascent. Matter on the physical plane, pressed by the forces of the vital and mental planes, of those worlds of life and thought which along with our world of matter constitute an evolutionary universe, has organised itself and produced life.

The animate forms have developed progressively throughout the prehistoric, vegetable and animal species. In the animal, the forces of the mental plane have successfully fashioned an instrument permitting them to assume contact with matter; thought is born in this world. Consciousness buried in the substance of the mineral world has thus traversed by a slow and multiform ascent the stages of the two kingdoms in order to arrive at man: *Homo sapiens*. The intellect is in full bloom. Man is the brightest product of our universe.

But has he the character of a work final and finished? Vain indeed is he who would dare to affirm such a thing. Man is simply the present term of this evolution; he is not the ultimate term. In truth, there is no reason, except probably in man's conceit, why evolution should cease with him and not produce a subsequent type, which will differ from him as much as he differs from the animal, or the animal from the plant.

This next step in the ascent of embodied consciousness will arrive under the pressure of forces of a realm higher than the mental. Sri Aurobindo calls it simply the Supramental plane.

For a long time it has been held that the evolution of living species proceeded by a slow and gradual progression of one species out of another, without any sudden jump. But modern Biology admits the probability of the contrary. The transition from one variety to another occurs by an abrupt leap, a mutation, and it seems to be the same for the species, even though the fact has never been actually witnessed. No doubt there is a period of secret preparation when the various factors arrange themselves in order to allow the mutation, as well as a period of adaptation and flowering out that follows the mutation.

Sri Aurobindo asserts that we have arrived at an important turning-point in human history, where the descent of new powers of consciousness and their establishment on the earth are about to occur. On the crest of an evolutionary wave man has to make room for a new being.

Can one form an idea of what the new being is going to be? It would doubtless be better not to attempt a guess. Just as the monkey could not foresee what man would be like, man is probably incapable of anticipating and forming an idea as to what his successor will be like. He would be prone to imagine him as a glorified man, a being in whom the characteristic human faculties (intelligence, memory, will, etc.) will reach their zenith: a super-man, in the Nietzschean sense. But he will certainly be nothing like it. That which will characterise him will be a new quality of consciousness, new faculties of the spirit, and not a development, not even a greater perfection of the existing faculties. These will not disappear; but the first place will belong to the highest.

In any case, the word 'progress' has a meaning, even though it be not the simple and childish one given to it by the Positivists of the nineteenth century, and even though it does not imply a state of technical development and increase of material well-being, such as that of the twentieth century. The faith in man's unlimited perfectibility, the fundamental optimism of man's heart and mind are completely justified.

It would be by the perception of the nature of the powers of the supermind that we would be able to have the surest indication of the direction of the new stride which nature is making ready. The task is difficult, for it relates to a domain of consciousness which has, up till now, not been revealed or manifested on the earth; it is closed to the intelligence of man in the same way that the consciousness of Pasteur or of Pascal is closed to the understanding of the ape. The

existence of mystics, of seers, of the inspired, of those who are clearly "in advanc of the race" proves that the faculties of the new man will be synthetic an intuitive in nature, and that one of his prerogatives will be the definite establish ment of his consciousness in the Supreme Reality.

That is why those who are awake to a spiritual aspiration, and are permeate with an intense desire to know and to live the Reality, eternal and omnipresen will be the fittest to grasp the meaning of the new perspective opening out befo them:—

"The spiritual life will draw its sustenance not from desire but from a pu and selfless spiritual delight of essential existence. And not only the vital natu in us whose stamp is desire, but the mental being too must undergo a new birt and a transfiguring change. Our divided, egoistic, limited and ignorant thoug and intelligence must disappear; in its place there must stream in the cathol and faultless play of a shadowless divine illumination which shall culminate i the end in a natural self-existent Truth-Consciousness free from groping hal truth and stumbling error. Our confused and embarrassed ego-centred smal motived will and action must cease and make room for the total working of swiftly powerful, lucidly automatic, divinely moved and guided Force. The must be implanted and activised in all our doings a supreme, impersonal, un faltering and unstumbling will in spontaneous and untroubled unison with th Will of the Divine. The unsatisfying surface play of our feeble egoistic emotio must be ousted and there must be revealed instead a secret, deep and vast psych heart within that waits behind them for its hour; all our feelings impelled t this inner heart in which dwells the Divine will be translated into calm an intense movements of a twin passion of divine Love and manifold Ananda. Th is the definition of a divine humanity or a supramental race. This, not an exag gerated or even a sublimated energy of human intellect and action, is the typ of superman whom we are called to evolve by our Yoga." (Sri Aurobindo— The Synthesis of Yoga, Chapter III.)

Terrestrial evolution has so far proceeded under the direction of natur acting as the executive agent of the Divine, without any conscious participatio of the beings drawn along by this evolution. But man has now attained a positio of full spiritual responsibility and the next step should be taken by an awakene and untrammelled will. The return to the Divine should be conscious and delibe ate, and not automatic and fortuitous. That is why man should, in order bring it about, collaborate with God; Yoga, union with the divine, is the fru of this collaboration. Such is the *raison d'être*, reason for existence of Yoga.

What is the method of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga? It is at once simple an complex. Simple, because its guiding principles are easy to grasp and few number; complex, because it has to adapt itself to the infinite diversity of th life and being of man.

Sri Aurobindo has called his Yoga, the Integral Yoga. He has conserve and utilised the essential elements of the ancient yogic methods. The startin point is a synthesis of the three classic paths of yoga, which are: *the way works*, in which union with the Divine is obtained by a consecration of will an action to the Divine, work being accomplished as an offering, without an attachment to the fruit thereof and with a perfect equality of soul with regard its result; *the way of devotion*, which leads one to the goal by the path of ever-growing intimacy with the divine Presence, by an exclusive adoration an all-absorbing love; *the way of knowledge*, where the path is a liberating vision

One in all and of all in the One, leading to the perception of the activity the universal Spirit in all things.

To these methods must be added the psychological discipline known as ja Yoga, which insists on the realisation of mental silence as a preparation for acquirement of superior knowledge. According to Sri Aurobindo all these ious ways are to be utilised, simultaneously or successively, in order to ap- oach the Supreme Reality from all sides, to establish with It an affinity as varied l as profound as possible, and to get all the human faculties to participate ively in this union. Nevertheless, the whole thing is as yet but a preparation, reliminary phase of Yoga which leads to the liberation of the individual con- ousness and to its entry into the Divine Reality. It should be followed by a ond phase aiming at the transformation of human nature.

A spiritual experience has always a twofold aspect: liberation and mastery. is often a bond broken, a door opened, a cloud dissipated, a heavy load laid vn; it is an ascent into an atmosphere of purity and of light. Then, as a sequence thereof, the liberated consciousness, from its new position, sets lf to act on the parts left behind, to enlighten them, to purify them,—or her to direct, or cause to descend, on them the purifying forces of the Spirit.

And as this transformation has to be integral, there is no question of itting from its scope any element of human nature, any faculty, any individual ainment. All that there is has to be taken and accepted as a starting-point, such it is. But no more can anything be preserved as it is at the starting-point, kened, deformed, perverted by the forces of ignorance. Above all, individual ism and desire must be eliminated, for they are at the very root of all version. The desire-soul in us must surrender itself to the profound divine law. en, and then only, becomes possible the perfection of the intelligence, of the and of the body.

The destruction of desire and egoism cannot be achieved solely by methods repression. These methods can prevent the outward manifestations of desire, they run the risk of burying it again within the vault of the subconscient, where ies hidden beyond the reach of the conscious will, abiding its hour. The enemy s continues to exist, all the more dangerous as one believes it to be dead. sides, ascetic repression brings about a drying up and a folding back. Along h the useless weeds, many plants in flower perish. Now, the disciple of integral ga aims at accomplishment, not at amputation—at a plenitude rich with the vers of the spirit, not at a sterile impoverishment. The task is thus more uous; it must be approached in some other way.

One of the first findings made by a person who plunges into the inner life is ut the complexity of his nature—mental, vital and physical. He finds himself the presence of a large number of distinct elements, each having its distinct stence, and each trying mostly to go its own way. The inner being is a field conflict of many contrary tendencies. The first necessity is to unify these ergent forces, and get them to submit to the central will. It is a long and ficult process, if one wishes to undo the knots and not to cut them. One er another, each part has to be taken up, studied, understood, converted and nsformed. Each thing has to be put back in its place, purified of egoistic desires, rendered to the guidance within, restored and limited to its proper function.

For the work of restoration, purification and transformation, the aspirant's n knowledge and power are altogether insufficient. He realises soon that he utterly powerless in the face of this work; by his own efforts he can obtain

only limited, unstable and superficial results. The work can be accomplished o by the divine Conscious Force acting for the perfection of his Yoga, the div Mother as Yoga Shakti. The secret of Yoga is to bring about the descent this divine Shakti, so that she can take charge of the labour of transformat and lead it to a triumphant issue.

To bring about the descent of divine Grace, one way alone is given to n and that is an inner attitude made up of three essential movements: aspirati self-giving and a rejection of all false movements.

The initial aspiration towards light, peace, purity and perfection should enlightened and intensified, and should become a great ardent flame that bu straight up without a flicker. It is more than a set prayer, it is a call of the he to the Divine accompanied by a will to open the whole nature and to transfo it. To this call, the Grace of the Divine ever responds, but self-giving is condition for it to be received and for it to be able to act.

The giving of self, of all that one possesses and of each one of its moveme has to be sincere, that is to say without any calculation or reservation. T implies a surrender to the Divine Will as soon as it is perceived and as far as disciple can discern it. But it is not an inert and passive surrender to all movements of universal nature—instincts, passions, thoughts etc.—that meant. Far from it. On the conrtary, a vigilant discernment should disclose to through all subterfuge and hypocrisy, all that comes to us from the forces ignorance and we should drive it back without hesitation or weakness.

The rejection needed is of desires, of impulsions and passions, of attachme and of preferences, of egoism, pride, lust, idleness, greed, jealousy, envy, f —the rejection of doubt, of obscurity, of stupidity, of obstinacy and of ill-v —the rejection of habits and demands, of opinions and of preconceived id All this, all that obstructs the action of the divine Shakti should at first recognised as not being ourselves, as not belonging to us, as coming to us fr the outside. It is thus easier to refuse it our consent, and then, with divine h to liberate ourselves from its hold and to drive it out. The light, the purity the power which descend from on high require that we accept them freely that we deny ourselves to all that is contradictory and incompatible.

Surrender is a thing which many find a difficulty in accepting. To modern spirit it appears to lessen the dignity and independence of the hu being. The reason for it is that surrender to the divine will has been often prea ed in an interested fashion, with a view to encourage resignation and acceptance of a physical or moral hold in individuals. But the abuse or perversion of a thing does not take off anything from its value or from its uti It is enough to be on one's guard and to cultivate spiritual discernment. S mission is not resignation. The true Yogi is not a person resigned. He endu injustice and oppression as he endures falsehood, ugliness and weakness; he does not, like a rebel, react violently to it, if he even appears to accept it a time, it is primarily because he knows that to him who has given himsel the Divine everything comes in its time and that he should take it all as of his Yogic discipline. But it is, above all, because he sees that the best rem for unrighteousness is to bring the Divine Truth down early, to ensure tha the opaque clouds of ignorance a rent appears and allows a ray of radiant tr to come through and touch sorrowful humanity. He realises the fact that unknown sage who meditates in the silence of his Himalayan retreat in orde enlarge and deepen the contact between his human consciousness and the di

onsciousness, accomplishes a work infinitely richer in consequence for the future f mankind than that which he would have been able to accomplish by throwing imself into direct action with only his human instruments to help him. It is o this truth that India owes the importance of her spiritual heritage and of her ontribution to the uplift of the world of tomorrow.

Freedom as against universal nature (physical, vital and mental) is good nd legitimate, for she is being perverted by forces from whose control we have o free ourselves. But freedom against the Divine would not have any meaning t all for him who wishes to become one with Him. If the word 'liberty' swells ne chest and makes the heart of man beat, it is because it raises an echo which urpasses by far all that man has so far understood by that word. True liberty ; that of the inner self as against nature. A man truly free is he whom nothing own here can bind, nothing can hold back, on whom neither vanity nor anger or fear can lay hand, he who, with a clear vision and impelled by the Divine, cts without a personal motive, without desire and without attachment. One vho asserts his right to follow his passions, or to pursue his interests, whether hey be personal or those of his family, of his class or of his country, is not free.

Another confusion, which occurs frequently, is not without danger. It is fact that, in the process of spiritual liberation, the disciple ceases to feel bound y social conventions, by current notions of good and evil and even rules of norality. They appear to him to be relative and arbitrary. He realises that very civilisation has its own rules and conventions and that a social order quite s good as ours can rest on bases entirely different. But the disciple can forsake hese rules (moreover, it is rather the rules that forsake him) only after having ound the inner guide and the unerring control which replace all outer regulation. And certainly the inner guidance is more exacting than any moral code. To bandon the laws of morality only to become again a slave to one's passions, or o cover oneself with a pretended freedom from prejudices as with a screen, n order to hide one's excesses, is a downfall and not a progress.

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We shall speak a few words about the part played by the master in the piritual development of the disciple. It can be said that his action proceeds in hree different ways. Firstly, transmission by written or oral teaching, instruc- ion, advice. Secondly, transmission by example; indeed the master is a person vho has already realised oneness with the Divine and whose life is a manifestation f this oneness. Thirdly, transmission by invisible influence and occult action. This last is the most important of the three; it is a tangible and constant reality or the advanced disciple.

For one who recognises the universe to be a gradual manifestation of the Divine, it is easy to admit a constant action of the Divine therein—under forms nore or less apparent, more or less direct, more or less effectual. The super- natural enters into the natural the whole time. The determinism, apparently igorous, of universal nature shows superposed planes of causality which pene- rate into one another. There is a determinism physico-chemical, a determinism vital, a determinism mental. Every time that the consciousness opens itself to forces from a higher plane, a determinism of another order is superimposed on the first and modifies it entirely. In proportion as our consciousness can open

to the supramental forces, the determinism, apparently inevitable, of our evolu tive world can be broken. Thenceforth the cosmic action of the aspects an manifestations of the one Supreme Consciousness—the gods, the avatars, th incarnations—ceases to be an enigma or a superstition. It becomes possibl to understand that, for the disciple, the Guru (the spiritual master) is, in a re and effective way, a special and chosen channel of the divine Grace.

Without the support of the hand that guides and uplifts, without th direction of the vision that discerns and enlightens, without the aid of the hea that consoles and sustains, the disciple would have, indeed, small chance surmounting the formidable difficulties of the task which he has undertake of avoiding dangers, of stepping over asperities, of passing amidst traps an quagmires, of going through doubt and discouragement, in short, of followin the path, "narrow as a razor's edge", as the ancient scriptures designate it.

In the working of the Divine power one can distinguish three stages whic however, are not clear-cut and run into one another. The first is the stage which personal effort predominates. The triple attitude, described higher u perfects itself and results, at first in consecration, then in an integral giving the self to the Divine. The second is a transition from the human to the divi action. It is marked by a growing influx of the power that is descending, by vigilant surrender and a supple and conscious response to this action. In the la stage, there is no longer any personal effort or any established method; effort giv place to a blossoming, spontaneous, puissant and happy, of the Divine flower o of the heart of the lower nature, purified and perfected:

"The Supreme has laid his luminous hand upon a chosen human vessel his miraculous Light and Power and Ananda." (Sri Aurobindo—The Synthes of Yoga, Chapter II.)

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Such is the vision which Sri Aurobindo spreads out before our eyes. H works present a conception about the world, about the place which man occupi in the world, and about his destiny, which is capable of satisfying the most arde idealist and, at the same time, of paying due regard to the demands of the ration listic brain. He whom it interests will be able to find therein a comprehension most of the religious symbols and myths, obscure and little understood, of o days. It englobes and explains the experience of the mystics and the occult trad tion. It proceeds from the most ancient Vedic texts and is in agreement with t ideas of modern science. Lastly, it gives a meaning to the present-day convulsio of humanity in labour. Such a synthesis has never been made before.

The pages of this study are not restrictive. They present what we consid to be the essential points but do not exhaust the subject. Many other aspe could have been approached; some that are connected with vast problems ha only been touched upon.

We would go against the spirit of his writing if we conveyed the impressi that Sri Aurobindo offers us a philosophic doctrine. No doubt, his teaching c be justified intellectually as well as any other, if not better. The reader is ev struck by the logical sequence and the compact nature of the arguments put fo ward. But the author himself tells us that the ultimate proof is experience—n experience of the senses, but Yogic experience, internal, equally valid and equa convincing.

Some people will not easily admit this proof, alleging that introspection is not sure method of knowledge. It is, they say, subject to illusion and error as much the other. Both demand that one accepts certain conditions, one submits the desired sway, in order to avoid illusion and eliminate error. Inner nowledge has, straight off, a higher value than perceptible knowledge in this that is direct and that, proceeding by identity, it attains even the reality of the object ithout passing through the distorting intermediary of a transmission by the senses r by an image of the mind. In any case, Sri Aurobindo has established that this nowledge can, when it is intellectually translated, furnish a view of the world erfectly reasonable and satisfying. But still it is not a system of philosophy; it a teaching of one who knows and who sees.

If this teaching is not a system of philosophy, much less is it a religious doctrine; contains no dogma. Sri Aurobindo offers us what he knows and sees; he gives is explanations and his advice in reply to questions asked. But he imposes no view f his on anybody. Sri Aurobindo's aim is to put the disciple in a position to now for himself. It is for this personal experience that he prepares him nd invites him. He asserts constantly that in Yoga a little practice is worth ore than a great deal of theory. Intellectual study is a preparation which the isciple can pass by; its principal aim is to calm the questioning and reasoning ntelligence and to ensure that it surrenders itself, satisfied, to a mode of know-edge which transcends it.

It is quite possible to start in Yoga without a belief in God, without even dmitting that there can be experiences transcending our senses (provided that ne does not become an obstinate negator). What is indispensable is an ardent spiration of the heart and mind towards a life, truer, finer, purer and vaster, and readiness to give all in order to realise it.

Sri Aurobindo makes no pretension to novelty. His teaching is a formulation n the language of our epoch of a part of the supreme knowledge. That which he as translated is unchanging and eternal, even though the translation, the formula-ion, has necessarily to be partial, and adapted to the conditions of the moment. Many sages of the past felt beforehand what has now been discovered, many seers oresaw the marvellous vision. They have left to other men some allegories, by vay of encouragement: the kingdom of God on earth, the new Golden Age, the econd advent of Christ, the Magnum Opus of mystic alchemists. .....But Sri urobindo announces to us the proximity of its realisation and, by his presence, ives us the assurance thereof. For that we bear towards him an infinite gratitude.

PAVITRA

(Translated from French by C. C. Dutt)

Doubts and the Life Divine

[A LETTER]

I MYSELF have gone through many of your doubts and waverings. I hav none of them any more. I may not be able to dispel all your difficulties, bu some remarks may be of help to you.

You seem to be struggling against three kinds of obstructions. The first i a fundamental uncertainty about the Divine's presence. This uncertainty cannc be removed by reasoning only. I dare say I can intellectually make out som sort of case for the Divine's presence, but I cannot wholly prove anything Neither, for that matter, can you wholly prove to me the contrary by mere logic This should make you see that we are in a region where more than the mind' argumentation can be of genuine avail. The mystical path and the mystica illumination demand a certain deep instinct to start you off and sustain you. Whe this instinct is strong and takes a central place in your being, the mind's doub about the Divine's presence becomes ineffective and you are aware of that pre sence in even the most dark and distressing situations. To make the most c this instinct you have to turn towards somebody who has followed it in himsel firmly and far—a Guru. Then you are enabled to go beyond living faith into living radiance, for you contact the soul in you that is always filled with th Divine. I can't say that such a radiance is very intense in me, much less that have illumined knowledge or the supreme realisation. I am only on the thres hold of the mystical life, but Sri Aurobindo has helped me to stand there an not fall hopelessly back. And he has helped me mainly by giving something c his own being, by casting on me something of his own atmosphere. Of cours his writings have greatly influenced me, but I could not have properly absorbe their influence without my approaching him primarily for spiritual rather tha intellectual aid—a direct touch of his own Yogic state rather than an indirec touch through a mental exposition or arrangement of his experience.

The first thing, therefore, to do if you are mystically inclined and yet hav misgivings about the Divine's presence is to open yourself to one you feel t be a Yogi. Nothing else will truly and basically help you. And the emergenc of the soul's radiance will also go a long way towards curing you of the restless ness born of the second kind of obstruction—namely, the puzzlement *vis-à-v* the problems of karma and rebirth, death and after-death, the why and whithe of the universe, the *raison d'être* of pain and suffering, poverty and destitutio Even if no complete answer is forthcoming at the start, you will have a profoun tranquillity. The mind may go on revolving its problems, but you will not b upset by them—and nothing will make you deviate from the conviction tha there is surely an answer to even the most baffling riddle. What is more, you wi feel that since the Divine is there, it is only by getting in full communion wit Him that the complete and satisfying solution can be arrived at, for th mind has not made the world nor woven its manifold texture and so cannc grasp in an "interior" way its warp and woof. The Divine's consciousness not like the mind, it is not divided from the essence of things but is aware c

by an identity because that essence is ultimately the Divine Himself. If there such a consciousness—and we cannot doubt its existence once the soul in us s put its radiant finger upon our normal being—then evidently our perplexi- s can end only by our rising into it. The soul by itself is able to give quite amount of instinctive understanding, but it cannot provide total knowledge.) get that knowledge vaster and higher realisations have to be won through e soul: the Cosmic Consciousness has to be compassed and the Transcendental uth has to be attained.

Here, however, I must say that the Cosmic Consciousness and the Tran- ndental Truth have many shades and grades. Various Yogis have given out their realisations various answers to the enigmas that are plaguing you. These swers they have couched in mental terms according to the type and quality their minds. As far as India is concerned, there are, for example, Buddha's swer and Shankara's and Ramanuja's and Madhwa's and Vivekananda's. I ve mentioned answers more or less philosophically expressed. Some have e character of philosophical intuition rather than philosophical intellection: ose of the Upanishads. Others are a blend of the two: the Gita's. Still others ve a symbolic poetic character: the Rig Veda's. Some have an air of homely sdom and a species of commonsense-coloured depth: Ramakrishna's. Sri urobindo has an affinity, in the basic message, with the Rig Veda, the early panishads, the Gita and the gospel of Ramakrishna, though he brings in addi- n to the manner of the seer, the poet or the pragmatist a fully formed philo- phical expression which can compare quite well with any in the past. The inity I speak of arises from the many-sidedness which is present in the Rig da, the early Upanishads, the Gita and Ramakrishna's gospel. Sri Aurobindo not inclined to make trenchant divisions and to erect an extreme into e whole truth. He is disposed to be comprehensive and global and not confine mself to a limited and exclusive intensity of insight. He favours no sharp tting-asunder of the Gordian knot of the universe's mystery: his the attempt unravel all the devious strands and show how each of them has a part to play d does not deserve to be ripped suddenly and summarily. An Aurobindonian es not run down any Yogi; he refuses, however, to be single-tracked. Raman aharshi, for instance, has a wonderfully luminous realisation of the Silent lf and all that he says is charged with its truth. Just because a man follows i Aurobindo, he does not reject Raman Maharshi as a false guide: the latter s caught hold of spiritual Reality—but in one aspect out of many, an aspect at cannot be overlooked or left unseized but is not the sole one. If it were the le one, a devotee like Chaitanya who is all absorbed in a Personal Active Deity uld be a hallucinated fool. Even Buddha would be reckoned as misguided since, ough he too was the apostle of a Supreme Silence and Impersonality, he did not l it the Self but named it Non-Being or Nirvana. The large variety of spiritual perience creates the presumption not, as sceptics suppose, that here is a field of peless contradiction and therefore purely subjective individual illusion but that re is some Reality which has a thousand faces and that individuals usually see e face or another. A many-sidedness and comprehensiveness and globality seem be eminently called for. Those who have tended towards them appear to have t nearest the ultimate Truth-Consciousness. Sri Aurobindo goes even beyond past realisation and expression of them, so much so that he will not reject any rt of our nature as lying for ever outside the possibility of divinisation: even our ost material being has, for him, a supporting truth or archetype in the Divine

Reality and can be transformed by a descent of that archetype. If many-sidedn and comprehensiveness and globality are pointers to the highest Truth, then Aurobindo by his super-synthesis, his absolute integrality, can surely be regar as "more advanced on the spiritual path, more perfect, more correct, more enlig ened than others". And it is not unreasonable to suppose that one who is suc likely also to give us the last word on sundry problems literary and artistic and ph sophical and political and sociological, provided there is ample developmen him of the literary, artistic, philosophical, political and sociological consciousn This, of course, does not debar a disciple of Sri Aurobindo's from discussing m ters with him and making suggestions to him. Sri Aurobindo encourages dis sion and invites suggestion, for often a lively give and take of the mind is the means of preparing the right mental state for a formulation of the truth of thi

I personally find Sri Aurobindo's answers very satisfying because of t integrality: he brings into his vision all the aspects of a case and presses tow such a solution as would draw out the truths of them and combine th truths into a final light. His light is not exclusively of this colour or that, but the sun's, a sovereign lustre in which the hues of the entire rainbow are held in ultimate fusion. And with that light playing, the tone and turn of the reply imagine an Aurobindonian giving when the undesirable phenomena of life c lenge him are impossible. I do not maintain my "peace of mind" by a reply the one you construct for me: "Oh, this is quite simple and clear; this is du that and that is the result of this; God is in all and all are in God; the world is manifestation of the One in its process of becoming the Many; there is in fac sorrow, grief, suffering, and evil but all is an appearance and the Inner Bein indestructible and eternal". Mind you, I am not saying that the reply you ima is quite off the mark. It has a certain truth, though a limited one: what in it is characteristic of an Aurobindonian is as much the facile form of it as the limita of its truth. It seems to hail from a rather queer creature—a robustly optim Browningesque *Mayavadin*! An Aurobindonian is not a *Mayavadin* nor robu optimistic; he is a Yogi radiantly realistic: he does not brush aside obnox things with an easy wave of the hand and a cheerful shutting of the eyes as if ignoring them he could prove them to be not there: he does know that the In Being is indestructible and eternal and that behind all the discord and distress divine felicity abides and the divine unity reigns, but he faces fully the terr surface of things and regards it as very real indeed though a reality of the sur and he strives his utmost to change and transform and divinise it instead of fle from it as if it were *Maya*, an illusory appearance. No Yoga has the shallow Bro ingesque attitude—it may be optimistic, yet without minimising sorrow, g suffering and evil. What does Sri Krishna in the Gita say? "Thou that hast c into this transitory and unhappy world, turn thy love to Me." Surely there i cheap cheerfulness here. Deeply and poignantly the misery of time is felt; together with it is felt also the possibility of a huge and happy escape by wa love of the Divine, the Inner Being, the indestructible and eternal Reality. Ind all Yoga is radiantly realistic—even Buddha with his notion that all cosmos i illusion recognises intensely the *dukkha* of it, while dwelling with great exulta on the exit he has found from this *dukkha*. Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga i the more realistic by not subscribing to illusionism in the Buddhist sense nor e to the Gita's doctrine that though action in the world is never to be disdaine a revolving in a field of *Maya* our true and final abode is in some supra-cos status after death has brought the God-realised soul its liberation from bo

istence. Sri Aurobindo is not content with substituting *Lila*, or God's play in the orld, for *Maya* or the universal illusion of activity. *Lila* too looks beyond, it does ot offer a complete fulfilment here and now of the whole self and nature of us, it oes not provide for total divinisation. And in as much as it does not, it stresses the eyond as the goal and puts earth-life into a minor place and tends to see it as not qually real as the Beyond. Sri Aurobindo never stresses the Beyond at the expense f earth-life: the call of earth is to him as insistent and as real as that of heaven, nd a final liberation into the latter does not solve for him the acute problems round us. Unless sorrow, grief, suffering and evil are accepted as realities that ill brook no forsaking of them, the Aurobindonian cannot reach the consummaon of his Yoga. He must tackle them until they are changed and replaced not by Beyond but by a divinisation on earth itself of earth's constituents. Yes, he is ost realistic. At the same time, he exceeds all other types of Yogis by being most adiantly so, for he has the largest hope—the hope of transforming what others ither accept only for the time being or as only part brightenable by the Divine's resence. He does not merely realise the Consciousness in which everything is for ver and unchangeably divine—God is in all and all are in God. He adds to it nother vision and experience—God not only *in* all but coming *out* in all, all not nly *in* God but bringing *out* God. This simultaneously implies for him an unflinchng realism and world-labour on the one hand and on the other an unqualified adiance and world-fulfilment. And an Aurobindonian's reply to the challenge of n imperfect world would be: "Life is no simple scheme of events and it has many hequered passages; its intricacy cannot be explained away nor its difficulty met n the cheap; the process of the One becoming the Many is hardly the entire *ationale* of a world emerging from the brute blindness of matter into the hungerngs of life and the dreamings of mind; God's presence is indeed everywhere and et in terms of evolution He has still to be everywhere present; the world's essence s divine but the world's appearance which is undivine is no phantasm and it has ot to be left at last by the ascending soul but to be transformed by the descending Spirit; the Inner Being's indestructibility and eternity are insufficient for me, the ost outer being also must become a stuff that neither perishes nor remains a niserable victim to fate and chance and the powers of darkness".

Mention of the integral divinisation which is the aim of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga brings me to the third kind of obstruction in your way. Excuse my dubbing his kind shallow and flimsy. Is it not absurd to prevent Sri Aurobindo from using he words "I" and "me" and "my" just because he has destroyed his ego nd surrendered his self to the Divine? Why should his use of them point to any goistic motive? All Yogis use personal pronouns for themselves—from the Vedic Rishis down to Ramakrishna. Such using is at times absolutely necessary for interourse in the world of men. Besides, why do you confine the "I" to the ego? The go is a particular formation in ignorant Nature; but behind it is the real "I", the ndividual soul. To ignore the individual soul is to make nonsense of almost every piritual attainment, for if the attainment is real and not just one more illusion n a world of illusions there must be someone who attains something, someone who gets liberated from mortal bondage, someone who evolves and reaches ulfilment. Surely the ego cannot perform these acts; it is the individual soul which does so. And the individual soul is not, like the ego, the opposite of he universal or a perversion of the transcendental, it can open into them and e united with them, for it is the complement of the former and a delegate of divine archetype of itself existing in the latter. When Sri Aurobindo speaks

in terms of "I" and "me" and "my", he means the individual soul of him th has become united with its own archetype in the transcendental and embrac its own complement, the universal. A divine triad, with one member of —namely, the individual soul—as the frontal instrument: that is what S Aurobindo the Yogi is. There is nothing egoistic in his employing that fron instrument. And since the new work he is doing, the work of integral transformati and supramentalisation which none of the past masters had attempted with fu consciousness of its possibility,—since this work is carried on by that fron instrument of his own highest being, it is quite appropriate that he should occ sionally employ terms with a colour of individuality in them. Furthermo who told you that it is the impersonal consciousness of the Eternal that wor the transformation of the earth-consciousness? If the impersonal consciousne were the only eternal factor, there would be no personal existence anywher personality implies a divine truth of itself which is trying to get manifested the earth-consciousness: a supreme Personal Consciousness is also an eter factor and it is this that carries on the transforming process of which S Aurobindo speaks and this, whenever a special call for direct utterance is fe can best utter its messages and its purposes through the incarnate figure of S Aurobindo by words like "I" and "me" and "my": there is no incongruity his saying, "My Integral Yoga". Your notions of individuality and personali strike me as very superficial: individuality and personality are not opposed self-surrender and self-dedication to the Divine Mother nor are they destroy by those gestures and acts; nor, I may add, are they incompatible, in the man fold and harmonious truth of the Divine, with a realisation of the imperson infinite, the impersonal eternal. What is opposed and destroyed is the desir ridden feverish fragment that is the ego—and the ego also is what is incompatib with the impersonal realisation.

I have tried to clear your mind. I cannot, however, be sure that you w find peace and light by my efforts. Mental aid in spiritual matters can be effecti only if you want it to be so or if you are really open to conversion. There is i our minds a perpetual doubter doubting for doubt's own sake. Don't let hi take possession of you under the guise of the genuine spirit of inquiry and th genuine mood of perplexity.

K. D. SETHNA

*The Future Poetry**

THE POETS OF THE DAWN (3)

F Wordsworth and Byron failed by an excess of the alloy of untransmuted intellect in their work, two other poets of the time, Blake and Coleridge, iiss the highest greatness they might otherwise have attained, by an pposite defect, by want of the gravity and enduring substance which force f thought gives to the poetical inspiration. They have the faculty of the revelatory ense to a high degree, but little of the revelatory thought which should go with it; nd their sight is only of the middle kind, it is not the highest things they see, but nly those of a borderland or middle region. Their poetry has a strange and unique uality and charm, but it stops short of something which would have made it upreme. They are poets of the supernatural and of such spiritual truth as may be hadowed by it or penetrate through it, but not of the greatest truths of the spirit nd this supernature remains in them abnormal. It is only when supernature ecomes normal to the inner experience that it can be turned into material of the ery greatest poetry.

Coleridge more than any of his contemporaries missed the poetic crown; he as only found and left to us three or four scattered jewels of a strange and singu- ır beauty. The rest of his work is a failure. There is a disparateness in his gifts, hich prevented him from bringing them together, aiding one with the other and roducing great work rich in all the elements of his genius. For instance, the poet ı him never took into itself the thinker. The consequence is that very much the reater part of his poetry is unconvincing in the extreme. But there are three oems of his which are unique in English poetry, when an occult eye of dream and ision opened to supraphysical worlds and by a singular felicity the other senses armonised, the speech caught strange subtleties and coloured lucidities of speech ıd the ear the melodies of other realms. This is to say that for the first time, xcept for rare intimations, the middle worlds and their beings have been seen and escribed with something of reality and no longer in the crude colours of vulgar adition or in the forms of myth. The Celtic genius of second sight has begun to ake its way into poetry. It is by these poems that he lives, though he has also vo or three others of a more human charm and grace.

Blake lives ordinarily far up in this middle world of which Coleridge catches me glimpses or at most stands occasionally just over the border. His seeing ems with its images, he hears round him the echoes of its sounds and voices. He not only a seer, but almost an inhabitant of other planes and other worlds; or at ast this subtle second sight is his normal sight. But his power of expression is not ual to his power of vision; he speaks very often of things which are unintelligible mbols to any other intelligence than his own. It is only when he casts into me echo of the language of the luminous children of those shores the songs their childhood and their innocence, that he becomes limpid to us and sheds on our earth some clear charm, felicity, wonder of a half-divine otherwhere.

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* A summary of Sri Aurobindo's Future Poetry ("Arya", 1917-1920)

Here again we have something unique, a voice of things which have not bee heard before nor has it been heard since. By his effort to put away from him as much as possible the intellectual mind, to see only and sing, and by his singulari and absorption he stands apart solitary and remote and produces only a ha effect because he has cut away the link which would help us to reach him an share his illumination.

A greater poet by nature than almost any of these, Shelley was alone them all very nearly fitted to be a sovereign voice of the new spiritual force th was at the moment attempting to break into poetry and possess there its kingdon He has on the one hand, one feels, been a native of the heights to which h aspires and the memory of them, not indeed quite distinct, but still environi his imagination with its luminous ethereality, is yet with him. As a poet h intellect is suffused and his imagination bathed in the brilliance of a communi with a higher law, another order of existences, another meaning behind Natu and terrestrial things. But in addition he possesses the intellectual equipme possible in his age and can speak with a subtle beauty and perfect melody t tongue of the poetic intelligence. He is a seer of spiritual realities, much mo radiantly near to them than Wordsworth, has, what Coleridge had not, a poe grasp of metaphysical truths, can see the forms and hear the voices of high elemental spirits and natural godheads than those seen and heard by Blak while he has a knowledge too of some fields of the same middle realm, is t singer of a deeper and greater liberty and a purer and nobler revolt than Byro has the constant feeling of a high spiritual and intellectual beauty, not sensuo in the manner of Keats, but with a hold on the subtler beauty of sensible thin which gives us not their glow of vital warmth and close material texture, b their light and life and the rarer atmosphere that environs them on some meetin line between spirit and body. He is at once seer, poet, thinker, prophet, arti In his own day and after, the strangeness of his genius made him unintelligi to the rather gross and mundane intellectual mind of the nineteenth centu those who admired him most were seized only by the externalities of his wo but missed its inner significance. Now that we are growing more into the sha of his ideas and the forms of his seeing, we can get nearer to the hidden he of his poetry. Still high pinnacled as is his flight, great as is his work and name, there is in him too a limitation which prevents the perfect self-express that we find only in the few supreme poets.

This was due to the conditions under which the evolution of his poe had to take place and to the early death which found him at the time when he w rounding towards the fullness of maturity. His early poetry shows his striv with the difficulty of the intellectual manner of speech from which these po of the supra-intellectual truth had to take their departure. Shelley uses langu throughout as a poet, still often it loses itself in a flood of diffuse and ov abundant expression. It is not yet the native language of his spirit. As his po develops, the eloquence remains, but is subdued to the growing splendour of vision, but the thought seems almost to disappear from the concrete grasp the intelligence into a wonder of light and a music of marvellous sound. *Prometheus* and *Epipsychidion* show this turn of his genius at its height. H he does come near to something like the natural speech of his strange, beaut and ethereal spirit; but the one thing that is wanting is a more ascetic force tapasya economising and compressing its powers to bring in a new full and s ing expression of the thought element in his poetry, not merely opulent

eloquent or bright with the rainbow hues of imagination, but sovereign in poetic perfection and mastery. Towards this need his later style is turning. Only in the lyric of which he has always the secret is he frequently and constantly equal alike in his thought, feeling, imagery, music. But it is not often that he uses the pure lyrical form for his greatest sight, for what would now be called his "message." When he turns to that, he attempts always a larger and more expansive form. The greatness of *Prometheus Unbound* which remains, when all is said, his supreme effort and one of the masterpieces of poetry, arises from the combination of this larger endeavour and profounder substance with the constant use of the lyrical mould in which he most excelled, because it agreed with the most intimate turn of his temperament and subtly exalted spirit.

The spiritual truth which had possession of Shelley's mind was higher than anything opened to the vision of any of his contemporaries, and its power and reality which was the essence of his inspiration can only be grasped, when it is known and lived, by a changed and future humanity. Light, Love, Liberty are the three godheads in whose presence his pure and radiant spirit lived; but a celestial light, a celestial love, a celestial liberty. To bring them down to earth without their losing the celestial lustre and hue is his passionate endeavour, but his wings constantly buoy him upward and cannot beat strongly in an earthlier atmosphere. The effort and the unconquered difficulty are the cause of the ethereality, the want of firm earthly reality that some complain of in his poetry. Yet to bring about the union of the mortal and the immortal, the terrestrial and the celestial is always his passion. He is himself too much at war with his age to ignore its contradictions and pass onward to the reconciliation. He has not the symbols nor the thought-forms through which he can make the spirit of light, love and freedom intimate and near to men. To bring his difficult significance home he lavishes inexhaustibly image on radiant image, line on dazzling beauty of line, the sense floats in a storm of coruscations and dissolving star-showers; the more we look on and accustom our eyes to this new kind of light, the more loveliness and light we see, but there is not that immediate seizing and taking captive of the whole intelligence which is the sign of an assured and sufficient utterance.

He is in revolt too against the law of earth, in arms against its dominions and powers, and would substitute for it by some immediate and magical change the law of heaven; but he fails to make the needed transition and reconciliation and his image of the thing to be remains too ideal, too fine and abstract in spite of the beauty of the poetical forms he gives it as its raiment or atmosphere. Something of the same excess of another light than ours surrounds and veils his intercourse with the spirit of Nature; the genii of the worlds of dream and sleep cluster too thickly round all that his waking eye seizes, "burning through the veil that hides it." Shelley is the bright archangel of this dawn and he becomes greater to us as the light he foresaw and lived in returns and grows, but he sings half concealed in the too dense halo of his own ethereal beauty.

Shelley and Keats, standing side by side, but with a certain antinomy are perhaps the two most purely poetic minds that have used the English tongue. Keats is the first entire artist in word and rhythm in English. Alone of all the chief poets of his time he is in possession of a perfect or almost perfected instrument of his native temperament and genius, but he had not yet found the thing he had to say, not yet seen what he was striving to see. All the other things that interested his great equals, had for him no interest; one godhead only he

worshipped, the image of divine Beauty, and he saw her in three or four forms, sensuous beauty, imaginative beauty, intellectual beauty and ideal beauty. But it is the first only which he had entirely expressed when his thread was cut short in its beginning; the second he carried far, but it was not yet full-orbed; towards the third and the highest he was only striving, "to philosophise he dared not yet," but it was from the first the real sense and goal of his genius.

On life he had like the others no hold; such work as the *Lamia*, *Isabella*, *Eve of St. Agnes*, in which he followed the romantic tendency of the time, was not his own deeper self-expression; the Odes alone are almost all of them among the scanty number of the chief masterpieces in this high and deliberately lyrical form. But the real soul of Keats, the thing he was striving to bring out of himself, is not to be altogether found even here; it lay in that attempt which first failing in *Endymion* was again resumed in *Hyperion*. It was the discovery of the divine Idea, Power and norm of Beauty which by its breath of delight has created the universe, supports it and moves towards a greater perfection. In *Hyperion* the idea is clearer and in bolder relief, but it is misconceived under a too intellectual, external and conventionally epic Miltonic influence. He has found a clue in thought and imagination, but not quite its realisation in the spiritual idea. It is by it and the intimation of it in his work that he belongs in spirit to these prophetic but half-foiled singers of the dawn. He lives more than any other poet in the very temple of Beauty, traverses its sculptured and frescoed courts with a mind hued and shaped by her forms and colours and prepares, but is never permitted to enter the inmost sanctuary. The time had not yet come when the spiritual significances could be more than hinted. Therefore Keats and Shelley were taken before their powers could fully expand. All wandered round their centre of inspiration, missed something needed and stopped short or were stopped short. Another age had to arrive which worshipped other and lesser godheads.

THE VICTORIAN POETS

The Victorian age was one of dominant intellectualism, but it had been an imaginative artistic intellectualism. But still whether we compare it with the inspirations from which it turned or with the inspirations which followed and replaced it, it is a depression, not a height. It is a descent into a comfortable and pretty hollow or a well-cultured flatness between high, wild mountains.

The descent from the uncertain but high elevations of the first romantic half-spiritual outbreak is very marked. It is a change of levels, a substitution. Keats is substituted by Tennyson, Byron by Browning, Wordsworth by Arnold, Shelley by Swinburne, Blake and Coleridge by Rossetti and Morris. There is a considerable gain but a deep loss; for this poetry has a more evolved richness but in that greater richness a greater poverty.

It was the work of the middle nineteenth century to prepare anew the intellectual insufficiency of the previous poetry. It was a more conscious, enriched and careful artistic execution, but wanting in height and profundity, with the added misfortune of a reign of rampant philistinism. The Victorian period for all its activity and fruitfulness was by no means one of those great intellectual humanistic ages which the world will look back to with a satisfied sense of clarity or of uplifting. Never was the aesthetic sense so drowned in pretentious ugliness, seldom the intelligence crusted in such an armoured imperviousness to fine and subtle thinking, the ebb of spirituality so far out and low. It was a period of smug commercial middle

ass prosperity, dull mechanism, hard utilitarianism and a shoddy liberalism. nteachable, it bore with a scornful complacency or bewildered anger or a listening ır of impervious indulgence the criticism of its fine and great spirits.

But this work of revolt and preparation was done chiefly in prose. The oetry of this period suffers by the dull smoke-laden atmosphere in which it owered; there is a lack in its gifts, in its very accomplishment a sense of some- ing not done. There is certainly much imaginative beauty, much artistic or ne or strong technical execution,—a great deal more in fact of this element an at any previous time,—much excellent work high enough in the second nk, but the inner surge and satisfaction of a free or deep spirit, the strong high- ding pinion or the skyward look, these things are rare in Victorian poetry.

Tennyson, whose fame is now a little dimmed and tarnished by the breath f Time, is unquestionably the representative English poet of his time. He irrors its ordinary cultivated mind as it shaped in the English temperament nd intelligence, with an extraordinary fidelity and in a richly furnished and eavily decorated mirror set round with all the art and device that could be ap- reciated by the contemporary taste. There is no more consummate master of ne language, the turn of phrase almost always hits the mind with a certain, ometimes easy, sometimes elaborate poetic device. It turns always to find and oes find the pictorial value of the thing to be described, and even, if such a hrase can be used, the pictorial value of the thought to be seized. The refine- ent and felicity are not of a kind which call for any unusual receptive power f aesthetic fineness to meet it and feel all its beauty. This art is that of a mas- r craftsman, a goldsmith, a silversmith, who never travels beyond general, ell-understood and popular ideas and forms. The spirit is not filled, but the ntire aesthetic mind is caught and for a time held captive.

But it is doubtful whether the future will attach to Tennyson's poetry at l near to the value it assumed for the contemporary English mind. When we y to estimate the substance and see what it permanently gives or what new ings it discovers for the peotic vision, we find that there is extraordinary little the end. Tennyson wrote much narrative poetry, but he is not a great nar- tive poet. *The Idylls of the King* miss both the romantic and the idyllic beauty nd arrive only at a graceful decorated effective triviality. There is no congruity etween the form and symbol and the feeling and substance. The wearing of ne white and scentless flowers of a blameless life in a correct button hole and tepid sinning without the least tinge of passion or conviction by decorated uppets who are evidently lay-figures of very modern ladies and gentlemen sguised as knights and dames, was hardly a sufficient justification for evoking ne magic figures of old legend and romance. There is a void of the true sincerity f poetic vision at the heart of the original conception and no amount of craft and ill in language and descriptive detail and picture can cure that original deficiency.

But some earlier work of the kind had a nobler success. In the *Morte d'Arthur* ere is some natural magic and vision which if it had been sustained and kept the me delicate and mystic strain, might have made the cycle of idylls a new poetic velation. But even in minor successes, like *Lotus-Eaters*, *Ulysses* and *Oenone*, ill the form is greater than the substance which has no heights and only occa- onally strikes depths. Tennyson does not figure largely as a lyrical poet in spite f one or two inspired and happy moments; for he has neither the lyrical passion nd intoxication nor the profounder depth of lyrical feeling. In his description of ature there is no greater seeing, but a painting of vivid details detached for

simile and ornament. Finally, he gives us a good deal of thinking of a kind i often admirably telling phrase and with much art of setting, but he is not a revea ing poetic thinker. His art suffers from the excess of value of form over value content, a frequent falsetto tone of prettiness, an excessive stress, a colouring whic is often too bright for the stuff it hues and is unevenly laid. By his very limitatio of mind he becomes the representative poet of a certain side of the English mer tality, but to this he brings an artistic decorative quality which is new to Englis poetry.

Others who have not the same limitations fall below him in art. Swinburn brings into the poetry of the time an element to which the rest are stranger passion, fire, sublimity and some strains of prophecy. He brings in too mar continental notes, but gives them the Anglo-Celtic aggressiveness. He is a gre lyrist but revels too much in device and virtuosities in form and his lyrical thoug and sentiment turned always towards a choric ode and dithyramb loses itself t often in a sonorous gurge and violence of sound. The quieter classical power Arnold which voices the less confident search of a self-doubting scepticism, h more lucidity, balance and grace, a fine though restricted and tenuous strain thought and a deep and penetrating melancholy, the mediaevalism and aesthet mysticism of Rossetti, the slow dreamy narrative of Morris which takes us to refuge from the blatancy and ugliness of the Victorian environment into th gracious world of old story and legend, bring in each their significance for the a and help towards the enrichment of the language of thought and artistic poetic feeling which is the chief work of this intervening time. They have all three th characteristic that they are studious artists,—it is significant that two of them a painters and decorative craftsmen. Their range is small, but they have broug into English poetry a turn for fine execution which is likely to be a long-abidi influence.

Browning stands apart from the contemporary poets in his striking force a originality. He is in many ways the very opposite of them all. His regard rang over history and delights in its pictures of the stir and energy of life and its chan ing scenes, over man and his thought and character and emotion and action, loo into every cranny, follows every tortuous winding, seizes on each leap and start the human machine. He is a student, critic, psychologist, thinker. His genius essentially dramatic; for though he has written in many lyrical forms, the lyric used to represent a moment in the drama of life or character, and though he us the narrative, his treatment of it is dramatic and not narrative, as when he tak an Italian *fait-divers* and makes each personage relate or discuss it in such a w as to reveal his own motive, character, thought and passion. He does n succeed as a dramatist in the received forms because he is too analytic; but has an unrivalled force in seizing on a moment of the soul or mind. With his gifts he might have been the Shakespeare of his time. Power was there a a hold of his material; what was wanting was the essential faculty of artistic fo and poetic beauty, so eminent in his contemporaries, a fatal deficiency. T great creator was no artist. He is a consummate technician, one might almost s a mechanician in verse; he had an immense command of language and was ne at a lack for forcible and efficient expression, but in its base it was the language a prosaist and not a poet, of the intellect and not the imagination.

This is the balance of the Victorian epoch; a considerable intellectual a artistic endeavour, contradicting, overcoming but still hampered by an unge atmosphere; two remarkable poets held back from the first greatness, one

mperfection of form, the other by imperfection of substance; four artists of small ange, but work of an accomplished, but overpitched or thin and langurous eauty; an enrichment and strengthening of the language capable of greater open- ngs and the creation of an artistic conscience. If the promise of the coming age s fulfilled, it may be remembered as a fine, if limited, period of preparation for he discovery of new, more beautiful and grander fields of poetry.

SISIR KUMAR GHOSH

The Teaching of the Gita

"THE Bhagavad Gita", says Swami Vivekananda, "is the most authoritative commentary on the Vedas." It gives us the essence of the old Vedantic knowledge of the Upanishads. The Vedanta, as generally understood, regards this world as an illusion and teaches the renunciation of life and work as a means of escape from this world movement which is full of evil and suffering. The Gita, on the contrary, has given us a practical philosophy of divine living, of turning this present life of suffering humanity into a divine life of peace and light and joy and harmony. It was this aspect of the Gita which was missed or ignored by Acharyas like Shankara. With Shankara this world is a creation of Maya, an eternal principle of inconscience consisting of the three gunas which keep the soul in bondage. But according to the Gita Maya is not the real source of the world, it is only a lower mechanism in the creative movement, it is *aparā prakṛti*; the true power of creation is the Para Prakriti, which is identical with the Divine; *parā devī śivābhinnā*, as Sri Ramkrishna used to say. The Para Prakriti, the nature of the supreme Divine, is the power by which He manifests Himself in the world, and everything and every movement in this world is essentially divine, however partial or deformed may be its manifestation at a particular time or place. And God being Sachchidananda, the whole world which is His manifestation can be nothing else in its fundamental nature. To fully manifest this innate Divine in us in this world, *ihaiva*, and in this material body before death, *prāk śariravimokṣaṇāt*,...that is the goal of life which the Gita has held before humanity. Shankara and the Mayavadins had to twist and torture considerably the simple and plain slokas of the Gita in order to turn it into a Shastra of *saṃnāyasa* or the renunciation of life*.

Other Vedantins regard work as the mechanism of bondage; men have to be born again and again in this world of misery in order to reap the good or evil fruits of their work; so the way of escape from life and birth and death is the renunciation of all work. The Gita, on the contrary, regards work as a means of transforming the present nature into the higher divine nature and divine life. That is why the Gita begins with Sri Krishna's severe rebuke to Arjuna who wanted to give up work in order to escape from the sin and misery of the worldly life. The true solution according to the divine Teacher is not to give up work, but to do all works in such a manner as to turn them into a potent means of transformation. The

* The current commentaries on the Gita are essentially based on Shankara's interpretation.

whole teaching of the Gita turns upon the question how to reconcile work wit spirituality, how to make work a means and afterwards an expression of th highest perfection or *siddhi*. The Gita does not make any outward distinctio of good or bad work, and does not give any external rule, *vidhi* or *niṣedha*, b which any work is to be judged; all its emphasis is on the spirit, the inner attitud with which the work is to be done so that it may lead to spiritual transformation and the one thing on which it lays the greatest stress is equality, *samatva yoga ucyate*. If we have to live and work in the world and still have a spiritu life, we must look at all things and all events with an equal eye:

"Equal-visioned everywhere, he sees the Self in all existences and all exis tences in the Self. He who sees Me everywhere and all and each in Me, is neve lost to Me nor I to him. He who has reached oneness and loves Me in all being that Yogin, howsoever he lives and acts, is living and acting in Me. O Arjun he who sees all equally everywhere as himself, whether it be happiness o suffering, I hold him to be the supreme Yogin." (Gita VI. 29-32)

That is the old Vedantic knowledge of the Upanishads, and it is the super ority of the Gita to other later formulations of it that it turns persistently th knowledge into a great practical philosophy of divine living. As a means attaining this high spiritual equality, the Gita has enjoined the performance *niṣkāma karma*, desireless work. This *niṣkāma karma* of the Gita is not th so-called disinterested or unselfish work done with philanthropic or patriot motives, though such work may very well be a preparation for the practice of th Karmayoga of the Gita. The Gita's ideal is to do work without any desir philanthropic or otherwise; it is not that the work should not have an obje or that it should not be done with every care so that the object may be attaine but the object should not be the motive of the work, and we must not be di turbed by the result whether it be success or failure. We should work n with the idea of serving ourselves or anybody else, but only with the idea serving the Divine through whatever work we may have to do. This desireles ness and equality can be established only with the knowledge that by our wo we cannot change even by a hair's breadth the course of the world. "Thou ha a right to action, but only to action, never to its fruits." (II-47). The Worl Mother is carrying on the world play which goes on under the presiding contr of the Lord, the supreme Divine (IX-10), and nothing can happen in the wor which is not willed by her and sanctioned by the Lord. Men are instrumen in her hands; but ordinarily they are only blind instruments; it is through th egoism and desire that the Divine "turns them all round and round mounted a machine." That is the true bondage and the root of all suffering. We have rise above all egoism and ignorance and make ourselves conscious instrumen in the hands of the Divine, *nimitta mātram*.

The Karmayogin may engage in philanthropic works, but he has not t egoistic idea that by his works he can do good to anybody, for he knows that t results of his works, however well-intentioned they may be, are not in his ov hands, but in the hands of some higher Power. The only reward which t Karmayogin expects from his work is the purification and transformation of l own nature, and this can result only when the work, whatever it may be, is do with the utmost skill and care, and is offered as a sacrifice to the Divine. A the work one has to do, *kartavyam karma*, is not to be determined by any ext nal rule or social status, but it must be an expression of his own inb nature, *svabhāva*. "He from whom all beings originate, by whom all t

iverse is pervaded, by worshipping Him by his own work, a man reacheth rfection." (XVIII-46)

By *siddhi* or perfection the Gita means the attainment of *sādharmya* or the eness of nature with the Divine; we have to rise above our present life in the ee gunas of *aparā prakṛti* and be established in the peace, light, power, rmony and joy of *parā prakṛti*, the Lord's own nature, *svam prakṛtim*. This lisation and the highest perfection does not come at once. It is only when the vine Himself takes up our *sādhanā* and fills us with His Light and Power and anda that the supreme transformation can be realised. At first we have to rk following our *svabhāva* and *svadharma* and practise *karmayoga* which at highest becomes one with *jñanayoga* and *bhaktiyoga*. But the last step is to e up all *dharmas* and put ourselves entirely into the hands of the Divine in an egral self-surrender. That is the supreme secret of the teaching of the Gita. bandon all dharmas and take refuge in Me alone. I will deliver thee from all sin d evil, do not grieve." (XVIII-66). The Divine Master of the Yoga, *yogeṣvara ṣna*, will then himself take up our yoga and raise us to our utmost possible rfection, the light and splendour of a divine and infinite nature.

ANILBARAN ROY

It is not a fact that the Gita gives the whole base of Sri Aurobindo's message; for the Gita seems to admit the cessation of birth in the world as the ultimate aim or at least the ultimate culmination of Yoga; it does not bring forward the idea of spiritual evolution or the idea of the higher planes and the supramental Truth-Consciousness and the bringing down of that consciousness as the means of the complete transformation of earthly life.

The idea of the Supermind, the Truth-Consciousness is there in the Rig Veda according to Sri Aurobindo's interpretation and in one or two passages of the Upanishads, but in the Upanishads it is there only in seed in the conception of the being of knowledge, Vijnanamaya Purusha, *exceeding the mental, vital and physical being; in the Rig Veda the idea is there but in principle only, it is not developed and even the principle of it has disappeared from the Hindu tradition.*

It is these things among others that constitute the novelty of Sri Aurobindo's message as compared with the Hindu tradition,—the idea that the world is not either a creation of Maya or only a play, lila, *of the Divine, or a cycle of births in the ignorance from which we have to escape, but a field of manifestation in which there is a progressive evolution of the soul and the nature in Matter and from Matter through Life and Mind to what is beyond Mind till it reaches the complete revelation of Sachchidananda in life. It is this that is the basis of the yoga and gives a new sense to life.* (From a forthcoming book in French on Sri Aurobindo by Gabriel M. Herzen.)

Reviews

Thus Spake Vivekanda. Sri Ramkrishna Math. Mylapore, Madra
Price 8 as.

A personal reminiscence. A young man in prison, accused of conspira
and waging war against the Birtish Empire. If convicted he might have
suffer the extreme penalty, at least, transportation to the Andamans. The case
dragging on for long months. And the young man is in a solitary cell. He cann
always keep up his spirits high. Moments of sadness and gloom and despair co
and almost overwhelm him. Who was there to console and cheer him up.? Vivek
nanda. Vivekananda's speeches, "From Colombo to Almora", came, as a gc
send, into the hands of the young man. Invariably when the period of despc
dency came he used to open the book, read a few pages, read them over aga
and the cloud was there no longer. Instead there was hope and courage and fa
and future and light and air.

Such is Vivekananda, the embodiment of Fearlessness—*abhīḥ* ,the Upa
shadic word, the *mantra*, he was so fond of. The life and vision of Vivekanan
can be indeed summed up in the mighty phrase of the Upanishads, *Nāyam āt
balahīnena labhyaḥ*, 'This soul no weakling can attain'. Strength! More streng
Strength ever more! One remembers the motto of Danton, the famous lea
in the French Revolution: "De l'audace, encore de l'audace, toujours de l'audac

The gospel of strength that Vivekananda spread was very characteristic
the man. For it is not mere physical or nervous bravery, although that toc
indispensable, and it is something more than moral courage. In the speec
referred to, the subject matter (as well as the manner to a large extent) is ph
sophical, metaphysical, even abstract in outlook and treatment: they are no
call to arms, like the French National Anthem, for example; they are not me
an ethical exhortation, a moral lesson either. They speak of the inner spirit,
divine in man, the supreme realities that lie beyond. And yet the words
permeated through and through with a vibration life-giving and heroic—no
much in the explicit and apparent meaning as in the style and manner and atm
phere: it is catching, even or precisely when he refers, for example, to these p
sages in the Vedas and the Upanishads, magnificent in their poetic beauty, s
lime in their spiritual truth, *nec plus ultra*, one can say, in the grand style supre

Yasyaite himavanto mahitvā
He whose greatness these snowy ranges declare

or, *Na tatra sūryo bhāti na candratārakam....*,
There the sun shines not, nor the moon nor the stars

or again,

Nāsad āsit no sad āsīt tadānīm
nāsīt rajo no vyoma paro yat...

"Then existence was not nor non-existence, the mid-world was not nor
Ether nor what is beyond."

The consciousness that breathed out these mighty words, these heavenly ounds was in itself mighty and heavenly and it is that that touches you, enetrates you, vibrates in you a kindred chord, "awakening in you someone dead" ll then—*mṛtam kañcana bodhayantī*. More than the matter, the thing that as said, was the personality, the being who embodied the truth expressed, ie living consciousness behind the words and the speech that set fire to your ul. Indeed it was the soul that Vivekananda could awaken and stir you. Any orator, any speaker with some kind of belief, even if it is for the oment, in what he says, by the sheer force of assertion, can convince your mind nd draw your acquiescence and adhesion. A leader of men, self-confident and old and fiery, can carry you off your feet and make you do brave things. But at is a lower degree of character and nature, ephemeral and superficial, that touched in you thereby. The spiritual leader, the Guide, goes straight to the irit in you—it is the call of the deep unto the deep. That was what Viveka-anda meant when he said that Brahman is asleep in you, awaken it, you are ie Brahman, awaken it, you are free and almighty. It is the spirit consciousness -Sachchidananda—that is the real man in you and that is supremely mighty nd invincible and free absolutely. The courage and fearlessness that Vivekananda ave you was the natural attribute of the lordship of your spiritual reality. Viveka-anda spoke and roused the Atman in man.

Vivekananda spoke to the atman in man, he spoke to the atman of the world, nd he spoke specially to the atman of India. India had a large place in Viveka-anda's consciousness: for the future of humanity and the world is wedded to ndia's future. India has a great mission, it has a spiritual, rather *the* spiritual ork to do. Here is India's work as Vivekananda conceived it in a nut-shell:

"Shall India die? Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct." And herefore is this call for the life spiritual? Thus the aspiring soul would answer:

"If I do not find bliss in the life of the spirit, shall I seek satisfaction in the fe of the senses? If I cannot get nectar, shall I fall back upon ditch water?"

The answer is as old as that of Nachiketas: "These horses and these songs nd dances of yours, let them remain yours, man is not appeased with riches"; r that of Maitreyi, "What am I to do with that which will not bring me immorta-ty?" This is then man's mission upon earth:

"Man is higher than all animals, than all angels: none is greater than man. ven the Devas will have to come down again and attain to salvation through a uman body. Man alone attains to perfection, not even the Devas." Indeed nen are gods upon earth, come down here below to perfect themselves and perfect he world—only they have to be conscious of themselves. They do not know hat they are, they have to be actually and sovereignly what they are really and otentially. This then is the life-work of everyone:

"First, let us be Gods, and then help others to be Gods. 'Be and make', et this be our motto."

That is indeed the only way of securing a harmonious and perfected umanity:

"Manifest the divinity within you, and everything will be harmoniously rranged around it."

The path to this higher harmonious divine life is that of hard labour, of crupulously untiring, conscientious work:

"It is struggle against nature and not conformity to nature that makes an what he is."

Work and not abstention from work is the way, but not work for ignoran enjoyment:

"The dwelling-place of the Jivatman, this body, is a veritable means o work, and he who converts this into an infernal den is guilty, and he who neglect it is also to blame."

"No work is petty"...."He who can properly prepare a *chilam* (pipe) o tobacco can also properly meditate".

These are luminous life-giving mantras and the world and humanity o today, sore distressed and utterly confounded, have great need of them to liv them by and be saved.

We warmly welcome the neat little volume containing such utterances beautifully selected and arranged, that can go into the pockets of the million an be the talisman of their salvation and redemption.

N. G.

Famine or Plenty. By villager. Published by Sahityika, Calcutta Price Rs. 5.

It has often been asserted that the Bengal famine of 1942-43, which took away about 20 lacs of people, and which seems to have already receded to the background on account of even more poignant events of recent happening, was a man-made one. It is now realised, though not always clearly admitted, that that calamity could have been averted if the Government had taken prompt measures and if the people had co-operated with the Government when the latter was hard pressed by the exigencies of a world war and the imminent threat of invasion on the Eastern borders of India. In the last year there was again a threat of famine even on a wider scale than the previous one, but though it has been averted by timely measures taken by the Government and the ready help given by grain-exporting countries, it cost 75 crores of rupees to India to buy food grains in the markets of the world. It has now become urgent that India must grow all the food she requires, for she cannot go on making imports like that for the simple reason that she has not the means to do so. By a close study, extending over twenty-five years, of the conditions under which cultivators in many parts of India exist, the author of the book under review is convinced that the spectre of famine could be banished from the land for ever. "The process would be long, arduous and difficult, but by no means impossible, given the necessary study of the many factors involved, courage, vision and above all, human understanding in full measure." The author, a Scotsman who prefers to pass as an humble "villager", has considered in this book the various factors involved, comparing them with conditions in other lands; it is packed with information and inspiring guidance. A special feature of the book is the warning given about the danger of intensive cultivation to which the authorities seem to be committed.

Our author insists that public opinion must never be allowed to forget the tragedy that was enacted in Bengal in 1943 unless and until action has been taken to make a recurrence impossible. So in the introductory chapter he gives a short poignant account of the calamity illustrating it with pictures with which the world became familiar in those days and which immediately brought help to stricken Bengal from all parts of India and even outside. If we take the dictionary meaning of famine as general scarcity of food, dearth, want of provisions, destitution, India can be said to suffer from famine every year, in fact every mon

f the year. The extreme poverty of India can only be remedied by industrial evelopment, and rightly attention has been focussed on it; but when India is etting on the path of rapid industrialisation, it is better to be reminded of the vils of industrialism which have been revealed in other industrially advanced ountries. As our author points out, the most important, single premise of the ndustrial revolution and all it implies is maximum production at minimum cost. n other words, articles, whether factory-produced or products of the soil, must be roduced as cheaply as possible, so that money-profits may accummulate. The id of Science was invoked to cheapen production from soil with what disastrous esults, the author has illustrated from prevailing agricultural conditions in the Jnited States as well as in South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Science romulgated a theory, which was accepted with acclamation by agriculturists ommitted to maximum production at minimum cost, that if you found out by nalysis what amount of nitrogen, phosphorus, or other components a particular rop had extracted from the soil and replaced that component by its equivalent, ou readjusted the balance in the soil and could with impunity grow a similar rop in the following year. Hence came the use of chemical fertilisers, and the vhole world is now taking to them. Science, as our author aptly observes, orgot that the soil is alive and is not composed of lifeless mineral ingredients nly. If you took the known mineral ingredients of the human body and fed a erson only on those ingredients in the form of synthetic chemicals, the person vould not continue to live. The result of the extensive use of chemical fertilisers as been that many fertile lands in America have already become deserts. Accumulating living soil at the rate of something like one inch in five hundred ears, Nature built up the prairie. As the United States developed, commercial arming spread westwards. First, the prairie was extensively over-grazed by attle; (meat, too, found a ready-cash market when it could be produced cheaply y over-grazing). Then, in more recent years, large crops of wheat have been aken off the same soil year after year. In the porcess of growing from a seed to fully matured plant, wheat extracts from the soil certain elements. These lements are different from the elements extracted by, say, the paddy plant, oya bean plant, the tomato plant, or the potato. If wheat is grown on the same oil every year then it must follow, as sure as the sun comes up in the East and ets in the West, that the productivity of the soil would deteriorate. The heavy rops taken off the prairie lands year by year were made possible only by increasing uantities of chemical fertilisers. But as the quantities of chemical fertilisers ncreased, so the humus content of the soil decreased. Humus, it will be re-nembered, has defied science to produce an exact chemical formula for it. The oil bacteria and the earth-worms, the main manufacturers of humus, left the rairie soil in exact relationship to the quantities of chemical fertilisers poured in. Deprived of its humus manufacturers, who are also its aerating agencies, the oil developed a hard crust. Because of its inability to absorb moisture as before, oil erosion and disintegration started. High winds came along; the now much-readed "dust storms" were created; as much as one inch of top soil was lost in single year (which Nature with so much patience had taken five hundred years o prepare). The prairie, in many places, is now in a fair way to becoming desert."

Chemical fertilisers are not alone responsible. But the very important point or India to appreciate is that chemical fertilisers are symbolic of the unnatural nethods of agriculture which have created these conditions in America. It is nteresting to note here that the farmer in Great Britain gave up rotation farming,

and instead of growing a fodder crop fed his milching cows largely on conce trates. By so doing he increased the quantity of milk. The result is that wh thirty years ago, the average dairy cow in England could be expeccted to yie milk up to eight or nine lactations, now, by overstraining the milk-produci organs through the feeding of concentrates, the average cow in dairy herds England cannot produce milk beyond two or three lactations. If the proce continues, says our author, it will require a few more years before the avera cow in the dairy herds of England will be sterile.

Another thing that science has introduced into agriculture as a method cheap production is ploughing by tractors. Indeed he reputed success of c lective farming in Russia is due chiefly to the use of tractors, and the communis in India are holding up the same prospect before our agriculturists. The autho opinion on this important matter is worth quoting: "Ploughing by tractor divorc the agriculturist from touch with the soil. He sits on top of the tractor, driving mechanical contrivance, whereas he formerly followed his plough on foot, guidi the depths of the plough, many times unconsciously, higher or lower, as his inna sympathy with the soil he was ploughing, demanded. ...The plough behind t tractor, on the other hand, is fixed at a certain depth. It cannot be adjusted fr quently to changing conditions along the furrows. Another factor is the actu weight of the tractor itself, which tends to counteract the lifting power of the plou The plough, therefore, fails to turn over the soil so completely as it otherw would do. The results of these two factors is to gradually create most favourab conditions for that arch-enemy of the farmer, soil-erosion. Russia is no exceptio There can be no doubt that soil-erosion there has been greatly accelerated large-scale mechanical cultivation, introduced to assist collective farming. The are vast areas in Russia with low rainfall and high winds. Old-fashioned hors ploughing, to a certain extent, counteracted the soil-erosion that inevitably follo low rainfall and high winds unless adequate protection and precaution are pr vided. The substitution of tractor ploughing has taken away the protection giv by horse-ploughing. Chemical fertilisers have been poured in to complete t process. Some competent observers now believe that Russia must be well on t way to competing with America for the record in the speed with which soils a being blown away, deserts being formed."

The author does not note that if tractors are used in great numbers in Ind a very serious problem would arise about the maintenance of the oxen. At pres bulls are used all over the country for agricultural purposes; with the introducti of tractors their occupation will be gone. In other countries this problem d not arise as beef is extensively used as food. In India a vast majority of the peo do not eat beef. The bovine race has to be preserved as we cannot dispense w the milk of cows. But in the natural course an equal number of she-calves a male calves will be born; what is to be done with the latter, as only a few b will be sufficient for breeding purposes? As a matter of fact, now the she-buffal are kept alive for their milk and the he-buffaloes, as they are not very useful agricultural purposes, are generally put to death by the most painful process slow starvation, even by the Hindus who are votaries of non-violence. If tract are introduced, the same thing will have to be done with the bulls and oxen al

The author has briefly dealt with all the aspects of agriculture in India. has shown how the survey of world conditions holds positive pointers. Austra for instance, has demonstrated how cattle and sheep can be improved by cor breeding. New Zealand has demonstrated how the health of boys fed on fr

nd vegetables grown on soils treated by properly prepared compost very quickly esulted in decided improvement. Lincolnshire in England demonstrates the eneficial effects of compost manuring on potato crops that were rapidly deterio- ating through harmful methods of agriculture. We shall here deal with two items hich he specially recommends to the Indian farmer, compost making and rota- on farming. Manure is prepared in India, if there is any preparation at all, in a ost haphazard manner. To our author compost-making is an art. Thus he rites about compost: "To understand fertilization properly it is necessary to emember that we do not feed the growing plant when we apply fertilizers. We eed the soil. Soil is alive, just as human beings, plants and animals are alive. Compost attempts to give back to the soil everything that has been extracted from , in a form most acceptable and most beneficial to the soil. The vital functions f the soil are by nature maintained through humus-developing activities, bacteria, arth worms, roots that break up the soil. Chemical fertilizers, not being an organic rocess, cannot adapt themselves in these natural organic processes... Most tradi- ional methods of dealing with farmyard manure in India are objectionable. Here may be sufficient to point out the objection to one common method, that of epositing fresh farmyard manure in pits. The base of the pit, being some distance elow ground level, is hard; so are the sides. This prevents rain which falls on the it from filtering away. The rain first soaks the base of the manure-heap in the it, then, when more rain comes, liquidity rises gradually up the pile. This pre- ents proper fermentation. When the manure is extracted from the pit and put n the ground it very often is still much the same structurally, so far as bacterial ctivity is concerned, as it was when originally deposited in the pit. Compost, on he other hand, is full of bacteria and humus. Compost can be composed of every- hing that will disintegrate into humus through a process of fermentation, not a rocess of putrefaction, such as takes place when leaves are broken into leaf mould n pits from which air and water are excluded by heavy earth covering. Village weepings of every description composed of organic substances are invaluable for he making of compost. So are all types of plant refuse, straw, chaff, kitchen gar- ages, egg-shells, fish-skins, road scrapings, ditch cleanings, wood ashes, slaughter- ouse refuse, horn, hoof and bone meal and, last but not least, farmyard manure. There are many ways of setting up a compost heap. The ideal to aim at is to ombine as nearly as possible all the different components as and when they ecome available. This can best be done by having several small heaps rather han a single very large one. First it is necessary to dig a shallow pit, to give a firm oundation. The pit should not be too deep, not more than twelve inches. A onvenient size for working is not more than ten feet broad, perhaps fifteen or wenty feet long. On the bottom of the pit it is helpful in the fermentation process o put a thin layer of cow-dung, or, if available, already fermented compost from n old heap. Drainage must be thorough. The structure of the heap as it grows p should be firm though moist, but not wet. Having got the pit prepared with thin layer of manure or compost on the bottom, everything that becomes avail- ble in the form of compost-making materials should be deposited every day. t is surprising how quickly the heap grows, once the habit is formed of deposit- ng in the heap everything that will break down into compost. When the heap about twelve inches high, a thin covering of earth should be applied. The overing should not be so heavy as to prevent air from penetrating to the eap, air being essential in the fermentation process. Then more compost-making aterials are added daily with a thin earth-covering being applied each twelve

inches. As the heap grows, there frequently is in India a tendency towards ove dryness. This can be counteracted, with very beneficial results to the heap, b daily application of cow-urine and the water in which rice has been cooke Both of these liquids supply very valuable ingredients to the fermentation proces At about six feet high, the heap should be given its final covering of earth, st so thin that air may penetrate. After about a month or so, the heap should b turned, the material in the inside being put on the outside and the material the top being put to the bottom. If fermention has been satisfactory, it will b found that the heap contains numerous earth worms and, to the expert eye, ba teriological activities will be discerned. A sure sign of success is fungoid grow becoming visible. The heap is then covered up again, and care taken to mainta it at the correct consistency neither too damp nor too dry. Where quicklime available, a little of it is beneficial.... Such cow-dung as can be spared shou be added to the compost heap. There it will definitely assist in the making an incomparably better fertilizer than it is by itself. A correct farming poli in India, of course, would aim at creating conditions under which t agriculturists would have fuel other than cow-dung. After another month or s the compost heap is again turned; if fermentation has been successful, aft still another month, it is probably ready to apply to the ground as fertilizer

The author has failed to mention one thing which is extremely valuable manure, viz., human excreta. In no other country this valuable material is much wasted as it is in India. China would not have been able to support h vast millions if she had not taken particular care to utilise human excreta manure, and India will not be able to feed her growing population unless s also puts all her human excreta into the soil as manure. Men take most fo from the soil and return the least, and that is a violation of the law of sacrifi and interchange which the Gita describes as the universal law by which creatures can prosper in the world. "With sacrifice the Lord of creatur of old created creatures and said: By this shall you bring forth, let this be yo milker of desires."

It is nothing short of theft to take the food out of the soil and not to p for it in the form of returned excreta, and Nature will never forgive that sin. course there is the prejudice against handling night soil and excreta. In ancie India there was, as we learn from the Mahabharata, the same prejudice agai the use of cowdung. Then our thinkers prepared myths instilling into the min of the masses the purity and even spiritual virtues of cowdung; the age myths is gone, but people now listen to the message of science, and it is hoped t Indian cultivators can be induced to follow their Chinese and Japanese brethe in this all-important matter of providing food for the teeming millions of Ind In cities big factories can be set up to turn the sewage into excellent manure, is being done in other countries and even in some provinces of India. In Calcu however the whole sewage is still being carried by canals into the Ganges whi takes it all into the bosom of the Bay of Bengal, while the people of Beng continue to suffer from chronic famine. Steps must immediately be taken stop this huge wastage. As it is, the enormous sewage material of Calcutta, inste of replenishing the impoverished soil of Bengal, is turning into hell the villag through which it is being carried by the canals. In villages, where more th seventy percent of the population live, the excreta can be turned into manu by simple methods. After the harvest is taken away, the cultivators should d small holes all over the field, not more than one foot deep, and the village

ould be asked to pass motions in these holes and cover them with a thin layer earth which will be lying by the side of the hole. Within a few days, it will n into earth which will be good manure. As it is, villagers pass motions anyere and everywhere thereby making the villages foul and unhealthy. Septic rines also can be introduced in villages, and the changed excreta can be conniently handled as manure.

The next thing to which the author gives great importance is rotation farming. roadly, the object of a crop rotation is to spread the different crops over a period years in such a way that what is removed by one crop can be replaced by natural ocesses during the growing of another crop or by allowing land to lie fallow for e or two years during the period of rotation. Fundamentally, rotation farming ses from a conception that the farm and all that lives thereon,—human, animal, nt life,—forms a biological unit, a living organism, a part of that far greater crocosm that is the universe. Obviously, such a conception breaks down imdiately when we attempt to apply it to the miserable two or three acres that present constitute the Bengal cultivator's average holding. But that does not event us from attempting to fit that miserable little holding into a greater conotion, controlled, or rather directed by a village Panchayet. This could be done asking the Panchayet to chalk out a rotation programme for, say, one thousand es and giving to the owner of each small area the right to share in the results that rotation farming provided he allows his own little piece of land to be inded in the rotation. An illustration of what happens when the balance of all ms of life maintained on the soil is upset by wrong methods of agriculture, be found in famine which, on this conception, is Nature's attempt to adjust balance by killing off the surplus people and animals."

As a proof that the proposals and suggestions given in this book are not too alistic, but eminently practicable, the author cites in an appendix the very eresting account of what has been achieved in Gosaba. Gosaba is an island in Sundarbans. Up to 1903 it was completely covered with jungles. At spring es, twice monthly, salt water seeped in from the sea inundating all but the hest points in the island. Tigers, crocodiles, jungle animals of numerous cies abounded. The only human visitors were wood-cutters, collectors of ney at certain seasons, a few shikaris who conducted tiger hunts from time to e. No human beings lived permanently on the island. None could have exist-

In 1903 Mr. Daniel Hamilton, a Scotsman in business in Calcutta, took a se of Gosaba from the Government of Bengal. Today, upward of 20,000 ple live on Gosaba in conditions so incomparably better than the conditions ler which cultivators elsewhere in Bengal live in that our author finds it icult to describe the difference. As an indication of the obstacles that to be overcome at the beginning the author mentions the fact that no nking water could be found in the island. Water, water everywhere but not a p to drink. Until distilling plant was installed even drinking water had to be ught from outside. Mr. Hamilton was determined to overcome all difficulties obstacles and his resolution ultimately triumphed.

The nature of agricultural indebtedness in Bengal and how it can be remedied ell illustrated by a typical case mentioned in the appendix. Some years before ning to Gosaba, Arjuna, an excellent cultivator, had borrowed Rs. 50 from a hajan. Something, he could not remember how many rupees, had been paid ually towards interest, but the debt continued to grow and the position in 1911 that he had given to the money-lender a registered bond for Rs 500 over his and

his son's 70 bighas of land in Gosaba. The terms of the bond were that Arjuna wou cultivate the 75 bighas at his own expense and give to the money-lender h the paddy produced as interest for one year on his original loan of Rs 50. Sur a revealing example of the power of money over cultivators in India. Indeed retired judge recently gave the opinion that money-lenders should be abolish by law, for no amount of legislation can protect the cultivators from the clutch of the money-lenders. Arjuna approached Mr. Hamilton for help in the matt Mr. Hamilton redeemed the bond by paying the full amount of Rs 500. H arranged to take Rs 120 annually from Arjuna. From this 12½% per annum w taken as interest, the balance went towards repayment of the principal. Arju was able to satisfy Mr. Donald by surrendering one-eighth part of his crop inste of the half formerly surrendered to the money-lender. Arjuna finally liquidat his debt in the sixth year.

That is the way of redeeming all agricultural debt in the country. The mone lenders should be paid in cash by the Government to the extent of, say, one-four only of their claim on the debtors, and the Government should realise that amou from the debtors in the manner adopted by Mr. Hamilton. This procedure w adopted with unique success in the Bhavnagar state in Western India.

Mr. Daniel established co-operative societies to finance the cultivators. H established co-operative agencies for the selling of paddy and a co-operative ri mill where members' paddy is milled. There is a Co-operative Bhandar whe essential articles such as cloth, mustard oil, kerosine etc. can be had. All the activities are flourishing and are living tributes to what can be done by and throu co-operative efforts when properly directed. But Mr. Daniel's most interesti experiment and probably the most successful was neither the abolition of rapacio money-lenders nor in the field of co-operation. It was a reversion to the old traditi nal method of relying on panchayets. He gave direction that disputes of whate nature should be referred to the Committee of Management of the Co-operati Society of the village concerned. The procedure has proved a complete succe As a direct result of having such an excellent system, Gosaba is in the unic position of being able to dispense with policemen. There are none in the islan

This excellent book ought to be translated in all Indian vernaculars a widely circulated through cheap editions.

A. B

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